

Net Decline in MIT Endowment

By Lauren E. LeBon
STAFF REPORTER

MIT was one of two among the ten richest universities in the nation to see a slip in its endowment last year, according to a report issued in January from the National Association of Colleges and University Business Officers.

At the end of the 2003 fiscal year, last June, MIT's endowment slipped by 4.2 percent from 2002 to \$5.1 billion. Meanwhile, the endowments at several other major

universities, including Harvard, Princeton, and Stanford, have all increased over the past year. Ninth-ranked Emory University saw a decline in its endowment of 11.9 percent.

MIT's endowment is currently the sixth largest in the nation, behind those of Harvard, Yale, Princeton, the University of Texas system, and Stanford.

Several factors lead to decrease

The value of the endowment

can change as a result of gifts and pledges donated to the university, investment performance, and expenditures, said MIT Treasurer Allan S. Bufford '59.

The combination of these three aspects leads to the dollar value of the endowment. In 2003, although investments were positive, gifts decreased and expenditures increased, leading to a net drop in the value of the endowment,

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Community Petitions Insurance Rate Hike

By Beckett W. Sterner
NEWS EDITOR

Over 1,700 graduate students and faculty have signed a petition asking MIT to improve on covering the cost of health insurance through either a subsidy or an increase in stipends.

The MIT petition follows a 60 percent increase in the extended health plan at MIT as well as a disproportionate rise in the cost of living compared to research or teaching assistant incomes.

Thomas A. Pasquini G, one of the petition organizers, said that the ultimate goal of petition was for students to be "treated fairly compared to other institutions."

The costs at similar institutions such as Stanford or Princeton are several hundred dollars lower; the cost is \$1,440 at MIT compared to \$864 at Stanford according an arti-

cle in the Stanford Report, and \$730 at Princeton according to its Student Health Plan guide.

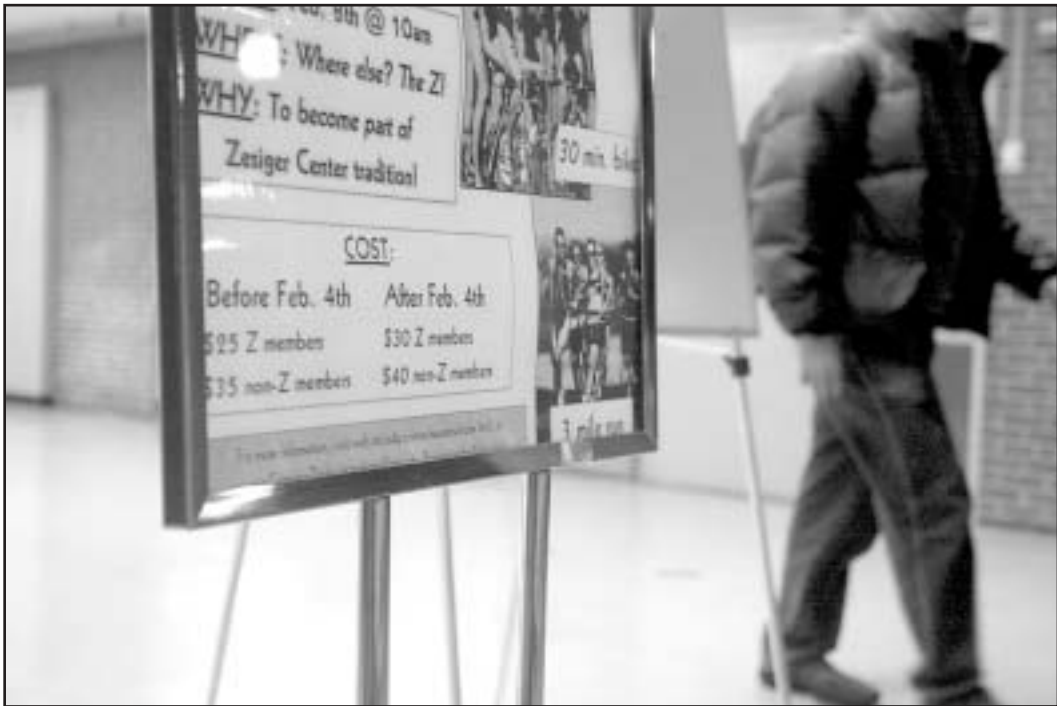
Without any changes in the coverage, costs would rise again this year although not by as much as last year, said director of finance and health plans at MIT Medical Ellen Offner. Offner said that the 60 percent jump was a one-time increase due to the depletion of a budget surplus that MIT Medical was using to subsidize the health plan.

Dean for Graduate Students Isaac M. Colbert said that there will be a "substantial double digit increase" in percentage next year.

Petition addresses cost of living

Jamil R. Abo-Shaer G, one of the petition organizers, said that the primary intention of the petition was

Health, Page 14



JINA KIM—THE TECH

Students have begun to protest the \$60 fee attached to new classes offered at the Zesiger Sports and Fitness Center. The fee is intended to cover budget shortfalls.

Sixty Undergrads Change Dorms in Fall; Baker, EC Have Largest Positive Flux

By Tatyana Y. Lugovskaya

Sixty-seven people entered the undergraduate fall housing transfer lottery this past December, and 60 of those students were able to change dormitories. Although the lottery results came out by Dec. 12, most moves occurred over the past two weeks, said Anthony Gray PhD '01, project director for graduate housing.

According to data from the Undergraduate Housing Office, the most popular dormitories were Baker, where only one person moved out and twelve moved in, and East Campus, where two moved out and nine moved in. The least desired dormitories were Next House and Burton-Conner, where number of residents moving out were much higher than numbers of residents moving in.

Lottery favors flexibility

Currently, the lottery algorithm strives to maximize the number of first choices satisfied, said Gray in a talk over Independent Activities Period about the mechanics of housing assignments.

However, a person can improve

his chances for transfer by being flexible rather than focused on just moving into one particular dorm, Gray said. By including four housing preferences instead of the two, a person has a higher chance of getting their desired assignment.

Accordingly, six females who only entered two choices into the fall transfer lottery were unable to move, and one male who only listed one preference could not transfer to a different dormitory.

Denise A. Vallay, assistant director of undergraduate housing said, "the lottery system helped eliminate waiting lists, which were out of hand when I started in 2001."

Because it is increasingly difficult to find affordable housing in the Cambridge and Boston areas, Vallay said

that more students are looking for MIT housing these days.

"The sense in which the demand is diverse and the supply is scarce is what causes tension," said Gray

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STEPHANIE LEE—THE TECH

Students and spectators look on at the 2.670 spinoff in Papalardo Lab last Friday afternoon. Honors are given to the fastest, slowest and most aesthetically pleasing sterling engines.



Akshay Patil reviews a rather frustrating year.

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Comics

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NEWS

Sorority rush numbers increase by 25 percent from last year, despite its shortened length.

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WORLD & NATION

Syria Arming Anti-Israeli Guerrillas, Officials Say

THE NEW YORK TIMES

WASHINGTON

Syria has resumed weapons transfers to anti-Israel guerrillas based in Lebanon, including a covert shipment of weapons from Iran smuggled aboard a Syrian cargo plane that had delivered earthquake relief, American and Israeli officials say.

The officials said a Syrian government plane that carried aid to Iran in late December had loaded up with small arms and possibly explosives intended for Hezbollah and Hamas, militant groups carrying out armed attacks against Israel.

"The supply flights seem to have restarted for Hezbollah and Hamas," a State Department official said.

The Bush administration has repeatedly demanded that Syria halt the flow of weapons to the radical groups, saying that only then would Washington consider an improvement in relations. Administration officials are now preparing a report on policy toward Syria that could lead to new sanctions against Damascus under the Syria Accountability Act approved last year by Congress.

Musharraf Pardons Scientist Who Shared Nuclear Secrets

THE NEW YORK TIMES

RAWALPINDI, PAKISTAN

President Pervez Musharraf granted a full pardon Thursday to Abdul Qadeer Khan, the founder of Pakistan's nuclear weapons program, a day after Khan appeared on television and confessed to sharing nuclear technology with Iran, North Korea and Libya.

As a result, Khan, 67, will not face prison, a fine or any other sanctions.

In a news conference here, Musharraf said that Pakistan would not hand over all documents from its investigation to international nuclear monitors. He said it would not order an independent investigation into the Pakistani army's role in the proliferation, calling the idea "rubbish." And he said he would never allow U.N. supervision of Pakistan's nuclear weapons.

The White House praised Musharraf for breaking up the network linked to Khan, which appears to have been one of the largest ever discovered, but made little mention of the pardon and declined to say whether it would insist that Pakistan sign the nuclear nonproliferation treaty.

Courier 'Glitch' Sinks Berkeley's Fulbright Chances

THE NEW YORK TIMES

BERKELEY, CALIF.

A missed courier pickup, an honest clerk, and an unyielding federal bureaucracy have conspired to deny 30 college students here the chance to compete for a prestigious Fulbright research grant.

"It seems surreal to me," said Mary Ann Mason, dean of the graduate division at the University of California at Berkeley. "It is an unnecessary, foolish, tragic incident."

The students, all enrolled in doctoral studies, got the news on Tuesday night from the university's chancellor, Robert M. Berdahl, that their applications were disqualified because they were late. Berdahl had flown earlier to Washington in a failed bid to persuade education officials in the Bush administration to change their minds.

The department, which administers the Fulbright-Hays Doctoral Dissertation Research Abroad Fellowship Program, rejected the applications because they were not mailed by the Oct. 20, 2003 deadline, according to a letter to Berdahl from Sally L. Stroup, an assistant secretary of education.

Tenet Says Intel May Have Overestimated Iraq's WMDs

By Douglas Jehl

THE NEW YORK TIMES

WASHINGTON

George J. Tenet, the director of central intelligence, acknowledged for the first time on Thursday that U.S. spy agencies may have overestimated Iraq's illicit weapons capabilities, in part because of a failure to penetrate the inner workings of the Iraqi government.

In a remarkable address at Georgetown University, Tenet presented a steadfast defense of U.S. spy agencies and their integrity. The speech marked the first attempt by Tenet to provide a comprehensive accounting of the gaps between prewar intelligence on Iraq and what was has been found on the ground there, which critics have called a major intelligence failure.

"When the facts on Iraq are all in, we will be neither completely right nor completely wrong," Tenet told a gathering of students and faculty that had been arranged at the request of the CIA on less than 48 hours notice.

Tenet's presentation, though careful and calibrated, was more candid and less defensive than any previous government comment on the issue. In offering what he called

a "provisional bottom line," he said U.S. spy agencies "were generally on target" in prewar warnings about Iraq's missile and unmanned aerial vehicle programs, but "may have overestimated the progress" that Iraq was making toward development of nuclear weapons.

Tenet also made clear that the failure so far to find chemical and biological weapons in Iraq had raised serious questions about the prewar intelligence that the stockpiles existed, though he said he believed that Iraq intended to develop such weapons and had the capability to produce them on short notice.

He insisted that intelligence agencies had acted independently of policy-makers, noting that intelligence analysts had never portrayed Iraq as presenting an imminent threat to the United States before the U.S. invasion last March. "No one told us what to say or how to say it," he said.

Later Thursday, some Democrats, including Sen. John Kerry of Massachusetts, the front-runner for the Democratic presidential nomination, seized upon that statement as evidence that the White House had no foundation for President Bush's prewar claim that "Saddam Hussein's

regime is a grave and gathering danger."

With U.S. teams still hunting in Iraq for weapons of illicit weapons and information about them, Tenet cautioned repeatedly in his speech that it was too soon to draw firm conclusions.

Tenet made clear that the prewar assessment that Iraq possessed stockpiles of chemical and biological weapons was based to a significant degree on reports relayed by a friendly foreign government from human sources whose information the United States has still been unable to corroborate.

"We did not ourselves penetrate the inner sanctum," Tenet acknowledged, saying that U.S. agents remained "on the periphery" of Iraq's illicit weapons activities. "What we did not collect ourselves, we evaluated as carefully as we could," he added. "Still, the lack of direct access to some of these sources created some risk — such is the nature of our business."

Tenet's speech was the most detailed presentation on the issue by a U.S. official since last October, when David A. Kay, then the chief U.S. weapons inspector, issued an interim report on his findings.

Dean Says He Needs Wisconsin Victory To Remain in Primaries

By Adam Nagourney And Jodi Wilgoren

THE NEW YORK TIMES

WASHINGTON

Reeling from a string of defeats and rising disillusionment among his supporters, Howard Dean said Thursday that his presidential bid would end if he failed to win the Democratic primary in Wisconsin in 12 days.

Dean, the former governor of Vermont, made his announcement in a dramatic overnight e-mail message to supporters. He was bowing to the reality of the collapse of a candidacy that had once seemed so far advanced that his aides had discussed whom he might pick as a running mate.

"The entire race has come

down to this: we must win Wisconsin," Dean wrote in an e-mail message that included a plea for \$50 contributions to finance television advertisements there. "Anything less will put us out of this race."

Dean's advisers said that in choosing Wisconsin to make his last stand, he had fixed on the state that was the birthplace of the Progressive movement and that had a history of supporting liberal causes. They expressed optimism that Dean would get his candidacy on track there and emerge as the chief alternative to Sen. John Kerry, who won seven of the first nine Democratic contests.

Still, Democratic strategists said it was unclear how much

Dean would gain from a win in Wisconsin on Feb. 17. By then, he is likely to have gone through 16 state contests without a victory. Kerry seems poised to win contests this weekend in Michigan, Maine and perhaps Washington state, and is making an aggressive effort to win contests next Tuesday in Tennessee and Virginia.

The fight in Wisconsin is now shaping up as perhaps the last big battle of the 2004 Democratic nomination campaign. Aides to Kerry, Dean and the other two major Democratic contenders, Sen. John Edwards of North Carolina and retired Gen. Wesley K. Clark, said Thursday they were preparing full-scale campaigns to win Wisconsin.

WEATHER

FA 4-for-1 Deal

By David Flagg
STAFF METEOROLOGIST

It is not often that we can experience four distinct types of precipitation in one day, but here is our chance! After a week of the mildest weather in Boston since the beginning of the year, the start of this weekend will feature a stark reminder that it is only February. A broad, swift-moving area of low-pressure will bring precipitation to Boston starting around midday. It will fall first as snow with minor accumulations likely, but perhaps up to 6" (15 cm) in the suburbs far north and west of Boston. The precipitation will gradually change to sleet (ice pellets) and freezing rain as warmer air enters aloft. Then, by early evening, all precipitation will have changed to rain in the city and may be heavy at times. For those with travel plans beyond the city this weekend, outlying areas west and north of town may have a prolonged period of icing tonight before any changeover to rain making travel especially hazardous. The rain will wind down early on Saturday morning, leaving mostly cloudy skies and mild temperatures. A few light snow flurries may dot the landscape later in the afternoon as the storm sweeps up through the Canadian Maritimes, leaving gusty winds in its wake for the balance of the weekend.

Weekend Outlook

Today: Snow developing around midday, changing to sleet and freezing rain, heavy at times. High near 35°F (2°C).

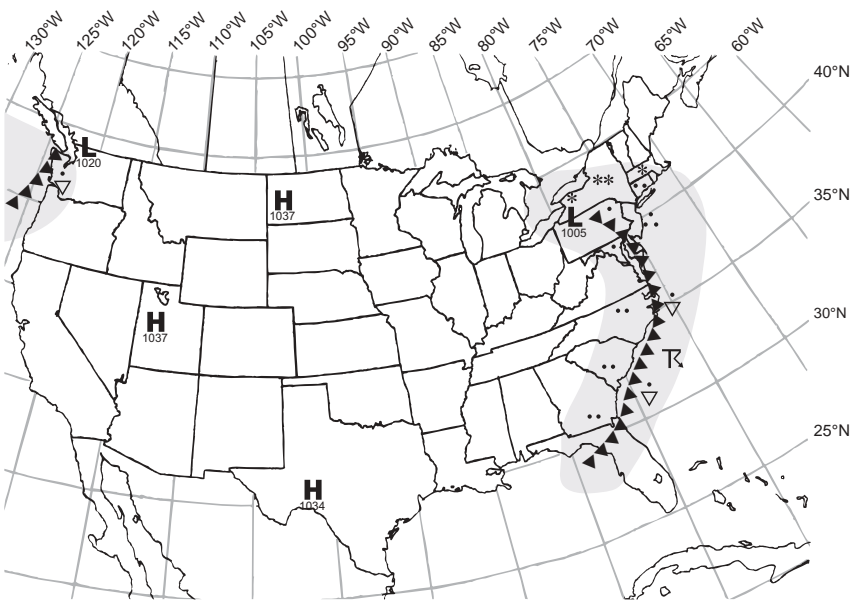
Tonight: Sleet and freezing rain quickly changing to rain, heavy at times. Low near 32°F (0°C).

Tomorrow: Morning rain showers ending, giving way to variable cloudiness. A chance of afternoon snow flurries. High near 40°F (4°C).

Sunday: Mostly sunny, windy. High near 25°F (-4°C).

Monday: Partly cloudy. High near 28°F (-2°C).

Situation for Noon Eastern Standard Time, Friday, February 6, 2004



Weather Systems	Weather Fronts	Precipitation Symbols	Other Symbols
H High Pressure	--- Trough	Snow *	Fog
L Low Pressure	— Warm Front	Showers ∇	Thunderstorm
S Hurricane	▲ Cold Front	Light *	Haze
	▲ Stationary Front	Moderate **	
		Heavy ***	

Compiled by MIT Meteorology Staff and The Tech

German Court Acquits Person Accused of Aiding 9/11 Attack

By Desmond Butler
THE NEW YORK TIMES

HAMBURG, GERMANY

Citing a refusal by the United States to allow testimony from a suspected Qaida operative in its custody, a German court on Thursday acquitted a former roommate of Mohamed Atta who was accused of providing support to three of the suicide pilots in the Sept. 11 attacks.

The court cleared Abdelghani Mzoudi, the second suspect to be tried for involvement in the attacks, of accessory to murder and membership in al-Qaida. Mzoudi, 31, who arrived in Germany from his native Morocco in 1995 to study electrical engineering, sat quietly in

a colorful ski sweater as the presiding judge, Klaus Ruhle, pronounced him a free man, if not precisely an innocent one.

“You are acquitted,” said the judge, glancing at the defendant, who was allowed to leave jail in December. “Not because the court is convinced of your innocence, but because the evidence was not enough to convict you.”

German prosecutors, who said they would appeal the verdict, had already convicted another former roommate of Mzoudi, Mounir el Motassadeq, on the same charges and based on virtually the same evidence. A German high court is scheduled to rule Mar. 4 on an appeal of that conviction, the first

and only one of a Sept. 11 defendant anywhere in the world. Last week, the high court made clear that the new evidence issued in Mzoudi’s trial would be a factor in their decision, which could result in a retrial.

Prosecutors blamed the acquittal on the Bush administration’s reluctance to make captured terrorists available for testimony and to allow prosecutors to make use of intelligence information on the terrorist network. “They must have their reasons, which they did not communicate to us,” said the chief federal prosecutor, Kay Nehm, according to The Associated Press. “I find this conduct by the United States incomprehensible.”

China Advises U.S. to Intervene On Proposed Taiwan Referendum

By Joseph Kahn
THE NEW YORK TIMES

BEIJING

China is putting pressure on the Bush administration to intervene more decisively to prevent Taiwan from holding a referendum on relations with the mainland, calling the planned vote a “dangerous provocation” that could lead to a confrontation.

Beijing sent a mission to Washington this week to urge the United States to take more concrete steps to rein in Taiwan’s president, Chen Shui-bian, a Chinese foreign ministry official said. Chen has repeatedly played down statements from President Bush and the State Department expressing opposition

to the referendum plan.

The Chinese effort reflects growing concern in Beijing that the Taiwan problem is becoming more acute, even though Chen recently softened the language of his proposed referendum and offered to resume talks with China if he wins re-election on March 20. Some officials and analysts here are alarmed that Chen has pushed ahead with the plebiscite despite U.S. opposition.

A foreign ministry official, who declined to be identified by name, said a request for more active intervention was conveyed to Deputy Secretary of State Richard Armitage, who visited Beijing late last week. The official said a fur-

ther appeal to the United States to take firmer steps to derail the referendum was relayed by Chen Yunlin, the head of the Taiwan Affairs Office of China’s State Council, or Cabinet, who met State Department officials in Washington this week.

Asking the United States to play an intermediary role with Taiwan breaks a longstanding taboo in Beijing, where officials have often criticized Washington for meddling in relations between China and Taiwan. As such, it shows how limited China’s options are for dealing with the matter, which some analysts here fear could lead to a military clash if its is not resolved soon.

A Vaccine For Humans Clears A Hurdle As Bird Flu Expands

THE NEW YORK TIMES

Avian influenza is still spreading in birds in Asia despite the slaughter of millions of chickens and other poultry, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations said Wednesday.

The United States also announced a ban Wednesday on importing birds and bird products from eight Asian countries where there have been outbreaks of the avian influenza.

Meanwhile, scientists have passed the first major hurdle in the complex process of developing an experimental bird flu vaccine for humans in case it is needed, an official of the World Health Organization said. The scientists are also working to develop a safer and easier test to detect the A(H5N1) strain of avian influenza now spreading across Asia, a mutation of the strain that caused outbreaks in Hong Kong in 1997 and 2003.

The steps are being taken as a precautionary measure because of fears that A(H5N1) might swap genes with a human strain to create a new one that could cause a worldwide epidemic, the organization said. The chance of that occurring is considered low.

So far this season in Thailand and Vietnam, the organization said, 17 people have been infected with the A(H5N1) strain; 13 died. According to the organization, nine of the 13 Vietnamese cases were fatal, as were all four Thai cases, including that of a Thai boy, 6, whose infection had been previously confirmed. The organization reported his death on Wednesday.

Judge Strikes Down NFL Rule

THE NEW YORK TIMES

A federal judge ruled Thursday that the National Football League’s rule restricting younger players from entering the draft was in violation of antitrust laws, opening the way for Maurice Clarett, the suspended Ohio State running back, to be eligible for the draft this year.

Judge Shira A. Scheindlin of U.S. District Court in Manhattan struck down the NFL rule, which prohibits players from entering the draft until three years after they graduate from high school.

The league said it would appeal the decision.

If upheld on appeal, the ruling would have potentially broad implications for the NFL, the National Collegiate Athletic Association and high school sports. In basketball, baseball and hockey, athletes can already jump directly from the playground to the professional ranks. Similar court rulings in those sports helped make it possible for teenagers to join elite professional leagues immediately after high school.

Scheindlin’s decision could make it feasible for football players to make a similar leap, including the 20-year-old Clarett, who sued the NFL in September. Clarett contended that the eligibility rule, which would have prevented him from entering the draft until 2005, represented a restraint of trade and an antitrust violation.

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Letter To The Editor

Defending the Southern Mentality

I find Ruth Miller's stereotyping of the Southern Republican voter to be extremely offensive ("How Dems Could Win the South," February 3). While she states that she is from the South, it seems that she must be from the elite Southern class — certainly not from the working class that she so wonderfully derides. Otherwise, you would not put into print such a ridiculous description of the Southern mentality.

According to Miller, "the worst justification for voting is to base your decision on character." Well, this sub-human Southern voter that she has described clearly cares about the issues as well as character. He says that President Bush is "family-oriented." For many people, issues surrounding the family are extremely important. These include marriage rights, abortion rights, the welfare/tax system, and the education system. Also, I'd like to point out that Jimmy Carter has in fact very little character. While he has a genuine desire to help others, he has no spine or, apparently, values. Just keep in mind that he shook hands with Fidel Castro. A man of principle would have spat on it.

So while Miller obviously thinks that her neighbors in the South are morons, maybe she should try to take a closer look before passing judgement. She says that "War is like football; they're both hereditary." In fact, war is much more serious than football, and don't think

that Miller's lower-class neighbors don't understand that.

What's more, her derision of religion is ridiculous. For many Southerners and many other people, religion is extremely important. This country was founded on many religious principles. Read the Declaration of Independence. While you don't have to agree with the religious beliefs of your neighbors — we have freedom of religion — you could try to have a little respect. Bush's "stance on faith is bold" not because he is very religious himself, but because he has done a lot to protect our right to our freedom of religion. The right to prayer in public is something which many liberals want to take away, and for many religious Southerners, this is a huge issue. Whether you

believe in him or not, God has been what has carried many Americans through their roughest times.

One more thing. Regardless of where he stands on the issues, wouldn't you rather have a man of character in the Oval Office? He is after all the leader of our country. According to John Adams, "It is religion and morality alone which can establish the principles upon which freedom can securely stand. Religion and virtue are the only foundations... of republicanism and of all free governments." Adams added, "Our Constitution was made only for a moral and religious people. It is wholly inadequate to the government of any other."

Jimmy Vanzo '06

Errata

Because of an editing error in last Tuesday's issue, a page of the "Perspectives on Diversity" spread was lost and an advertisement was placed on page 11 instead. The columns "Are We Ready for a Minority President?" by Natasha N. Running and "Diversity GIR Would Benefit MIT Community" by Terrence R. Strader are available on the Tech web page at <http://www-tech.mit.edu/V124/N1/> and on page 17 of this issue.

In a photo spread last Tuesday ["Killian Chaos Erupts in Kresge"], one photo caption was missing. The caption for the top left photo should read, "The team of Chris Grossman '06, Eric Lieberman '05, and Eric Hilton '04 sets up their robot for competition."

In the same photo spread, a caption misidentified the year of Tiffany Dohzen. She is a member of the class of 2006, not 2004.

Opinion Policy

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If You Thought Soylent Green Was Bad, Try Hamburger

Ruth Miller

For years, I’ve apathetically used the phrase “It’s in the water” to write off the stupid actions of various people. Until recently, I wasn’t the only one with this cavalier attitude towards the food supply. So when news broke that a cow infected with Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy, commonly known as mad cow disease, had been found in the United States, people suddenly took an interest in their food.

Gluttony and avarice are a deadly combination. In the interest of its own survival, the meat packing industry has earned a reputation of recklessly cutting costs to produce a more palatable product. Two books that outline these atrocities of the meat packing industry are Upton Sinclair’s *The Jungle* (1906) and Eric Schlosser’s more recent *Fast Food Nation* (2002). In combination, they illustrate how little has changed in the last century.

By running production lines at increasingly ridiculous speeds, and by staffing employees with stagnant or decreasing hourly wages, the meat packing industry increases its volume while expenses remain approximately the same. To keep up with the speed of production, employees are given small, repetitive tasks. Risks associated with high production speeds include not only decreased safety of the employees, but also easier spreading of E. coli 0157:H7, a bacterium native to the fecal matter in an animals’ intestines. All it takes to infect the meat with this bacterium is for the worker to slip with their knife on one of the

hundred cuts they make within an hour. This is just one of the reasons factories must slow down their production speed to prepare meat for exportation to meet foreign food safety regulations.

More pertinent to the current scare is how the cattle are cared for while they await processing. Years ago, the cattle industry made the transition to grain from grass in their feedlots as a method of saving money. The increase in grain prices has encouraged the use of cheaper, higher protein feed. Prior to 1997, about 75 percent of the cattle in the United States were routinely fed the remains of dead cattle and sheep, as well as dead cats and dogs purchased from animal shelters. These practices were only banned by the FDA to stop the spread of mad cow disease. Until December 2003, “downers,” or cattle that were too sick to walk, were allowed to be processed.

As encouraging as it may be that the industry is making a few steps in the right direction, they still allow dead pigs and horses to be fed to cattle. Not only can dead poultry be fed to cattle, but dead cattle can be fed to poultry. Cattle blood is still allowed in cattle feed. Cows are not carnivores. They have four stomachs to digest products with a high cellulose content, not protein.

In the interest of reassuring the public, some groups have taken an interest in exposing foods to radiation as a safety measure. I’m not going to debate the benefits of nuclear science; instead, I’ll pose the question: if we have nothing to fear from irradiated meat,

why euphemize? “Cold pasteurization” is the official USDA term for exposure to gamma radiation, and is accompanied by an under-marketed, happy, green symbol. If this technique is safe, which is yet to be proven, it would only allow the processing plants to speed production and become even more careless with our food supply.

It’s unreasonable to expect the government to do its job in ensuring USDA regulations are being met inside processing plants. With the strong movement toward deregulation, and the favoritism played by the current administration, nothing will change on its own.

Other methods of rearing cattle and packing meat do exist. Australia, the only major beef producing nation that has yet to see a case of mad cow disease, feeds its cattle grass, saving its grain for hungry people. Some small ranches and processing plants in the United States employ safer measures than those of the larger processors. These fall under the headline “organic,” and might just be what America needs.

I’ve never imagined life to be possible as a vegetarian, though I can respect those with the strength to do so. After beginning this article, I went to Pour House for half-price burger night. I don’t claim to be an activist; I’d rather leave that to the professionals. As an average consumer, I can be concerned about what I’m eating. I encourage the dining services of MIT to take an interest as well. If they subsidize organic foods as heavily as everything else, they might be surprised what choices their patrons make.

Howard Dean: What Really Went Wrong?

Basil Enwegbara

I have followed American politics since I was a teenager. And since the Jimmy Carter-Ronald Reagan race, I have always predicted the winners of the presidency. Even when Bill Clinton was confronted with sex scandals past and present, I still predicted that he looked presidential and seemed appealing with his message. The same happened with the Al Gore-George Bush race; I got it right.

When I saw Howard Dean a year ago, I saw a man with all the qualities that I was looking for in a presidential candidate, even though he sometimes seemed too angry to make it to the White House. I knew that John Kerry was more experienced and also has a presidential outlook, but Dean seemed full of energy and enthusiasm.

So the questions are: Am I wrong this time? What really went wrong with Dean’s momentum? Can Dean recover and beat Kerry, who now seems unstoppable?

There is a saying that what is gotten easily, goes away easily. Dean became the frontrunner with less effort than others. As a result, he quickly saw his success as a given, and believed the deal was already completed with the American electorate. He even began to think about his vice presidential candidate.

Without any careful thinking of the consequences, he began to attack the so-called Washington politicians, describing them as insider folks who have never done well and have spent so much time in the nation’s capi-

tal that they have little new to offer. Combining this criticism with his electrifying antiwar rhetoric, Dean was able to draw a large crowd, particularly among youth and those who over the years lost interest in politics.

With everything going well for him, Dean pushed his luck, trying to embrace those Southerners who fly Confederate flags in their pickup trucks. As if he had not made enough of a political blunder, Dean accused the national chair of his party of not doing enough to stop what he called unnecessary attacks on him by his opponents.

But the straw that broke the camel’s back was an unfortunate episode in the days before the Iowa caucuses, as Dean angrily shouted down on someone trying to ask him some embarrassing questions. Most people, including myself, were outraged that the man who wanted to become president could not control his temper. People began to doubt if he had all it takes to compete with President Bush and to become America’s president.

Complicating the already sorry situation was the discovery that four year ago, Dean accused the Iowa caucuses of being a bunch of special interest groups who have hijacked the process. His unplanned meetings with President Carter and the embarrassment of trying to steal a political moment presented by the Martin Luther King Jr. national holiday seemed to send the message of arrogance to a lot of people.

And the results are reflected in what his campaign has become in such a short period of time. Senator Kerry did not hesitate to seize

every opportunity Dean’s blunders presented. Not only did the Massachusetts politician build a strong base that did not alienate his fellow Washington insiders. He ensured that he presented himself as more reliable on dealing with uncertainties than Dean, something he proved earlier by mortgaging his own house in Boston when his campaign was stifled by a lack of funding.

One thing is certain; it will take a miracle for Dean to turn events around in his favor, especially since time is not on his side, and Senator Kerry has growing momentum as the most electable candidate to beat President Bush by polls. The only good news — if it ever comes — will be Kerry coming to recognize that the crowd Dean commanded is still loyal to him and may not go out to vote should Dean be disgraced out of the race. Senator Kerry must come to appreciate that in order to win the November elections, he has to bring everyone on board. And if that means making Dean his running mate, let it be so. It is politically obvious that Kerry, as a senator, must not choose a fellow senator as his running mate. The most appropriate choice would be a governor, like Dean, who has been a chief executive officer of a state with good records.

Kerry must search for the best way to reconcile with Dean and his followers. I am not claiming that if Kerry does all of the above, he will definitely beat President Bush. Nor am I saying that if he does not do them he will not win. As far as the battle with Bush is concerned, it is a huge strategic game of its own.

Begetting the Bomb

Daniel Collins

Contrary to popular belief, it was not the U.S. that produced the world’s first self-sustaining nuclear chain reaction, but Gabon. In a hardened, underground facility called the Oklo Fossil Reactor, a rich uranium deposit achieved criticality and operated for at least 10,000 years. The technical details of its operation were kept buried, away from regions with nuclear ambitions.

Today, in an age of espionage, KaZaA, and the Patriot Act, information is no longer as secure. The Manhattan Project, which imported many great minds to give the U.S. the bomb in 1945 and whose piece de resistance ended World War II, was the subject of Soviet spying. Four years later, the USSR detonated its first atomic bomb, and the Cold War arms race was truly underway. Britain, which also pursued a wartime nuclear weapons program, caught up in 1952, and France in 1960. With France’s help, Israel joined in the late 1960s, and with Soviet assistance, China in 1964. This unsettled India, which tested its first device in 1974. China responded by helping Pakistan on its way, a journey it completed in 1998.

Dr. A. Q. Khan, Pakistan’s leading nuclear researcher and national hero, recently admitted to having shared nuclear technology with Iran, North Korea, and Libya. Iran has been in intense diplomatic negotiations for many months now, but does not yet have the bomb. North Korea is believed to possess nuclear capability, while Libya has recently acquiesced its WMD programs. Iraq had a program, but the U.N. sanctions and IAEA inspections of the 1990s put an end to that. Argentina, Brazil and South Africa also sought the bomb. It should be noted that each country that ceased its nuclear program did so under international pressure.

The Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) is the most widely accepted international arms control agreement, and is signed by every nation except India, Israel and Pakistan. Despite its successes, there is growing debate on whether the NPT should be overhauled. This stems from the apparent non-compliance of various nations and the suggestion of UN impotence. With the risk of non-state actors such as Al Qaeda, the need to secure both know-how and materials is more pressing than ever.

Part of the solution was proposed by an MIT report released last July. With nuclear energy so often being a veil for weapons development programs, ceasing the separation and recycling of plutonium in nuclear energy production, which yields by-products prime for weapons development, would alleviate non-proliferation concerns. In a similar vein, lessening the perceived regional security risk, which is so often the motivation for proliferation, could go a long way. This would require more open dialogue, more give and take, and a re-assessment of the responsibilities of the U.N. Side-stepping international organizations, as is currently en vogue, is a recipe for disaster.

We should think harder about how to achieve security in a post-Cold War environment, and limit the transfer of harmful information. Nuclear technology is being passed around like a sexually transmitted disease — we need some nuclear family planning.

Daniel Collins is a graduate in the Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering.

The Ombudsman

John A. Hawkinson

New Volume

Starting last issue, *The Tech* rolled over from Volume 123 to Volume 124. A new cadre of editors took over the masthead, and we can expect to see differences in how the paper appears. Traditionally this is announced in a spoof article called the “Gaggle”; I guess it may publish soon...

Too much fact-checking?

I last talked about fact-checking of opinion and letter pieces back in May, and I focussed on insufficient fact-checking. It didn’t really occur to me to consider some of the downsides of too much fact-checking, or of editorial policies that are potentially too risk-averse. While fact-checking is important, declining to

publish anything that might be sharp or critical isn’t the best road either. It’s a fuzzy line.

On Jan. 26, Jonathan Katz, a professor of physics at Washington University sent an e-mail to letters@the-tech. Katz wrote:

Mark Wrighton, presently chancellor at Washington University, is believed to be on the “short list” for the president’s job at MIT. He is responsible for expelling from campus reporters covering a student demonstration, and for the Washington University “Guidelines for Media.” These stated that no reporter could come onto campus and no student or faculty member could talk to a reporter without an official minder from the Public Affairs office present. It reminds one of Saddam Hussein’s Iraq, or Brezhnev’s Soviet Union. See <http://www.physics.wustl.edu/~katz/press.html> for details. Do you want this for MIT?

The opinion editor (Vivek Rao) and editor-in-chief (Brian Loux) ultimately declined to

run the letter. Loux expressed in an e-mail, “we have no way to verify his story,” but I think that’s unfair. I think that any actions taken by anyone who is at all a plausible candidate for the president are fair game for criticism.

Certainly the presidential search committees can’t be expected to verify who they are considering, but everyone else may take educated guesses. If *The Tech* prints accurate information about potential candidates (even if they’re not being considered by the search committee) and their actions, no harm is done to those parties.

In fact, Mark S. Wrighton is a likely candidate. He was MIT’s provost from 1990 through 1995 after chairing Chemistry from 1987-1990, and then left for WU’s top job. Back on Dec. 6, I personally heard a rumor that he was a likely candidate.

If the letters page for *The Tech* were to be plastered with pros and cons of likely presi-

dential candidates, I don’t think it would be a bad thing.

Tuesday’s Issue

On the whole, I was pleased with Tuesday’s issue. On the front page, the comics moved from the center front inside box over to right-hand index listing, making room for prominent placement of three stories, rather than the usual two.

On the other hand, I was disappointed that the right-hand inside box went to the backpage sports story, which is already easily findable by sports readers. That left the page 29 story “Harvard/MIT Matchup Services Will Keep Contacts Anonymous” buried with no front-page (or back-page) references.

“MIT Lays Off 100 Staff Members” could have used a sense of scale for the 100; how

A new year, a new term.
Isn't it time you tried
something new?

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SPO TECHNO

Open House on
Sunday, February 8th.
News Meeting: 5 p.m.
Dinner: 6 p.m.
Photo Meeting: 6:10 p.m.

Student Center Room 483, x3-1541
join@the-tech.mit.edu

Thoughts On Past Issues

Ombudsman, from Page 5

many people total does MIT employ? (I think it's around 10,000). After the article jumps to page 23, it has four paragraphs under "Layoffs will affect service" — but they don't actually explain how services will be affected. What positions are going to be vacant?

"UA Completes Under Half of Fall Projects" summarized where the UA stands on its projects, but I found myself wondering where to look for further information on the listed projects. Where can readers look for more information? (<http://web.mit.edu/ua/www/projects/goals.html> seems to be an answer.)

Apparently a production error resulted in the omission of an entire page's worth of content (page 11). See the errata (page 4) for details. It's disappointing, but I guess these things happen.

The center spread of the issue was a photo spread for 6.270; unfortunately, there were eight captions for nine photos, and the "clockwise from top left" ordering of the captions didn't make sense. Photography editor Peter R. Russo suggested that in the future photo spreads, *The Tech* might print a thumbnail layout/index of photos so they are more identifiable. I agree; anything would be better.

Last week Wednesday

Looking back to Wednesday Jan. 28, a front-page story announced the demise of *Prometheus*. It's really too bad for *The Tech* to lose that competition. While the campus journalism field is hardly empty, *Counterpoint*, *The Thistle*, and *Voo Doo* don't really provide the kind of news journalism that competes with *The Tech*. I had hoped *Prometheus* would be a good influence, fostering competition with *The Tech*. Alas, it's evidently not to be. (I was pleased with the *Tech* article, though. It seemed to cover all the bases.)

In case you're wondering, that issue was supposed to have a color front and back (as dictated by the presence of a color ad on page 13), but the relevant departments were not informed.

The *Tech's* Ombudsman welcomes your feedback, to ombudsman@the-tech.mit.edu. His opinions are his own.



FEATURES

Deep Conversations

Dr. Sadoway — Every Girl’s Crazy ‘bout a Sharp Dressed Man

By Zachary A. Ozer

This week, *The Tech* tracked down Professor Donald R. Sadoway in his office and asked him all sorts of deeply personal questions about incredibly fascinating topics. Then we got around to it and did an interview.

The Tech: What would be a better title for 3.091 than 3.09 fun?

Professor Donald R. Sadoway: You want a running title or like a course number?

TT: Your choice.

Sadoway: Materials, the stuff of technology and the substance of civilization.

TT: That ought to work. Speaking of 3.091, honestly, if you were a student at MIT, how well would you do on your exams?

Sadoway: I’d ace them. Totally stuff ‘em.

TT: I like the absoluteness.

Sadoway: I have my moments of vacillation, but not on this.

TT: Professor, we all know how you feel about cellular telephones going off in class, but tell me, if you were a cell phone, how often would you be turned on?

Sadoway: Depends on the cell phone owner. I’d be on whenever I was forced to do so.

TT: What about in class?

Sadoway: NEVER IN CLASS. But for Sadoway as a cell phone it’s involuntary. If I’m in the hands of someone so uncivilized that I might be on in class, it would be embarrassing, but involuntary for me to go off.

TT: Now, we know that students at MIT don’t drink if they’re underage and that members of the faculty and staff practice moderation in their consumption, but from a material scientist’s point of view, what is the best cure for a hangover?

Sadoway: Try to avoid it. Practice moderation. However, in the unlikely even that consumption exceeds capacity, drink lots of water before you retire. Continue to hydrate. Eat something first thing in the morning — something fatty and with protein. Obviously, I have no experience with this, but that’s what I’ve read in medical journals, heard from col-

leagues, people in airports and on elevators.

TT: Is there a reason that faculty members, such as yourself with a Fresca, seem to drink Coke products? Is there some sort of subsidy they provide?

Sadoway: There is no Coke conspiracy. At least not that I know about. I like the taste and I try not to have caffeine all day long. I have a couple of cups of coffee first thing. But Fresca, it’s just right there. But to answer your question, I’m not on the board of Coke, I don’t own stock in Coke, and I’m not with the grapefruit owners. Trust me, I’m not profiting from drinking Fresca. It certainly doesn’t enlarge my wealth.

TT: Now I realize that this sounds a bit strange, but which member of the rat pack do you consider yourself to resemble most closely?

Sadoway: Well, uh, that’s a tough question. It’s a cross between Dean Martin and Joey Bishop. Dean Martin for the way he carries himself and Joey Bishop because he was the best educated.

TT: Could he have been a material scientist?

Sadoway: He could have been a metallurgist, but not a ceramist.

TT: A ceramist?

Sadoway: Someone who works with ceramics.

TT: Oh. Alright. Another similarity that’s been pointed out between you and the Rat Pack is your spiffy dress wear. I mean, I’m so impressed that I came in a Brooks Brothers suit today.

Sadoway: Oh, the Brooks Brothers, Brooks and Brooks. You know, there’s a third one.

TT: Really?

Sadoway: Yes. He’s colorblind. Also, never confuse the Brooks Brothers for the Smith Brothers.

TT: Alright. I’ll keep that in mind. What I really want to know, though, is how often can you wear clothes again without washing them?

Sadoway: Well, what do you mean? Because a top coat and hat, for example, you

can wear many times.

TT: What about just a normal, everyday outfit?

Sadoway: A suit for example? If your personal hygiene is first rate [chuckles] and you’re not a slob at the table, [continues laughing] many times. If you have bad hygiene and play dropsy, you’re going to be good friends with your dry cleaner.

TT: So how often do you do laundry?

Sadoway: As soon as the stock is depleted.

TT: The stock of what?

Sadoway: Well, to keep it clean... usually when I’m out of socks.

TT: What is the worst experience you’ve ever had at a restaurant?

Sadoway: Let’s see. When I was first hired onto the faculty, I went to a rather upscale restaurant in Boston. I was in my late twenties. We went out for dinner for a birthday or wedding anniversary and were seated at a table for two. The wait staff was buzzing around us, but we were ignored for a long time. Eventually the food came and there was a bug in my salad. Ugh. I discreetly told one of the wait staff that I didn’t want to mix meat and salad. After another long while they re-emerged with a salad. They may have just taken the bug out. I brought it to the attention of the maitre d’, but there was no compensation, nothing. To this day I shy away from the restaurant when people suggest it. The dining experience is important. There is a need for attention to detail.

TT: Do you eat out often?

Sadoway: I tend not to eat out here. New York is better for eating out. Some places in Boston charge the same amount, but the level of service is much higher in New York.

TT: Do you go to New York often?

Sadoway: Sometimes. I go to see the opera and I do some shopping.

TT: Do you take the Chinatown bus?

Sadoway: No, I hop in my car and drive down.

TT: The Studebaker?

Sadoway: An Avanti. I recently traded in my old one.

TT: Is it electrified?

Sadoway: No, but if I win the lottery or a patent goes through, I’ll electrify the car. Did you ever see *Gattica*?

TT: A while ago.

Sadoway: You remember the car of the future? It was a ’63 Avanti. On the soundtrack they overlaid the engine with the sound of an electric motor.

TT: What about hybrids?

Sadoway: They’re boring. The layout of all new cars is very poor. There’s a poor interface and layout to the controls. The experience of driving them is empty. Also, I like refueling because I get hungry and I enjoy dining. You know why taste is important? It helps to recognize toxins. To go back to a previous point, taste is important, but it’s the dining experience which is critical. In cars however, the driving experience has gone downhill.

TT: What about trucks? Have you driven a pickup?

Sadoway: Freshman year in college, I worked for a company that installed swimming pools in Toronto. We were all 18, 19, and 20. We piled all of the equipment up in the back. The clutch was very unforgiving. We would get stuck in rush hour traffic in that truck and you could very easily pop the clutch and stall. You had to be really good because it was so unforgiving. Also, it didn’t have air-conditioning and Toronto, in the summer, it gets pretty warm.

TT: Finally, what’s your favorite piece of lab equipment and why?

Sadoway: Obviously, it’s electrochemical. I like the frequency spectroanalyzer.

TT: Frequency spectro...

Sadoway: Frequency Spectroanalyzer. It allows you to measure AC and the complex impedance of an electrochemical system, such as a battery. It’s important because one can use it to understand the limitations of the system and understand what needs to be optimized. Also, it’s a powerful diagnostic tool.

TT: I think that about wraps up the interview. Thank you so much professor.

Sadoway: I was happy to oblige.

Gourmet Geek: Lactolicious

By Rose Grabowski

Milk and cookies have long been a staple of most children’s existence. It was an after-school snack when we were younger, and as we grew into college-aged “adults,” it has become a midnight nibble n’ swig to prepare for a long night of p-sets and labs.

But what was once a luscious grouping of whole milk and friendly fresh chocolate chip cookies has more often evolved into skim milk and brittle, low-fat off-the-shelf biscuits in this health conscious and I-will-lose-that-freshman-fifteen-damnit environment.

So when a friend of mine returned from the store and pulled out his Lactaid and Chips Ahoy, a few of us were quite shocked. Our sacred duo had been adulterated to the point that milk was no longer even a component. Another friend accused him of drinking chemicals, not milk. She claimed Lactaid had no place calling itself milk (the carton does indeed say “real milk!”) because the whole concept behind Lactaid is that lactose, the milk sugar, has been removed, and how can milk be milk without milk sugar? And thus commenced a 40 minute argument about the nature of milk. We never came to a consensus. However, being the food nerd I am, I decided a complex and decisive analysis was in order to dispel any myths about Lactaid and milk.

It turns out that milk is not just lactose and water — those are actually some of the least important elements. Milk also includes vitamins, minerals, fats, and complex proteins. The fats include fatty acids and lipid-soluble vitamins and provide about half the

calories of the whole liquid. The proteins include curd (or casein) proteins and whey (or lactoglobulin) proteins. Yes, think Little Miss Muffet.

These proteins are the most nutritional and critical parts of milk. The fats provide some of the texture and lactose provides much of the flavor, and together they provide most of the calories. However, fats and lactose are not essential to milk.

We generally accept the 1 percent and skim versions as the real deal, and the flavor provided by lactose can reasonably be approximated by other sugars. Lactose is not even exclusive to milk — it can be found in forsythia flowers and a small number of tropical shrubs. The proteins are what enable the derivation from milk of other dairy products and distinguish the liquid so essentially from any other.

So, since Lactaid is just milk minus the lactose, it may indeed claim the title of milk. Although I’m guessing it doesn’t go as well with Oreos as the alternative. The question then becomes why would people drink Lactaid at all? Obviously it has something to do with lactose intolerance, but there are a few intricacies to that label that are worth exploring.

Humans are the only animal that have the ability to drink milk after infancy. However, the vast majority of humans don’t even have this ability (or, really, don’t have this abnormality.) Lactase, the enzyme that breaks


down the lactose disaccharide into glucose and galactose, usually peaks in concentration in the human stomach shortly after birth and reaches a steady minimum when a child is between one and a half and three and a half years old.

Evolutionarily, this makes perfect sense, because most mammals would not come upon milk after this stage of life. Producing an enzyme to handle it would be a waste of resources. When lactose is ingested without the presence of lactase, bacteria in the digestive tract still metabolize it. However, instead of making the sugar useable, they ferment the lactose, producing carbon dioxide and a decidedly unpleasant feeling in the mammal’s body (read: flatulation). So this is what happens to most adult humans when they ingest too much lactose and the bacteria get a boon to their food supply. The rest of us keep producing the lactase and digest lactose just like any other regularly digested item.

However, despite the label that so many people assume, most lactose intolerant people are actually able to consume substantial amounts of dairy products without effect. Most can drink up to a pint of milk a day, and since cheese and yogurt are virtually free of lactose because the culturing process (once again, fermentation) uses lactose for fuel, those cultured dairy products are fairly easy to digest.

So maybe my friend wanted to consume more than a pint, and that’s why he chose Lactaid. Perhaps he is on the less tolerant end of the spectrum and really can’t consume much dairy at all. Maybe he just likes Lactaid better than regular milk... but, in any case, at least there’s a real-milk option for the huge portion of the population that needs to avoid lactose — I mean, how else would they down their Oreos?


If you have questions or areas of food science that you would like to see explored, you can contact me at roseg@mit.edu.



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Positive Sinking: MMIII@T

By Akshay Patil
FEATURES EDITOR

Every year people far wittier than me write insightful and humorous articles summarizing the events of a year. Naturally this leads one to ask the question, “Why not me?” For most of us, however, the process ends there, since lack of time and/or access to a public forum hinders our attempts to reveal our probable inability at performing the task any better than the aforementioned writers. Sadly, I suffer from neither deficiency (or boon, as the case may be) and so I give you MMIII@T:

January

Despite a face-lift and the introduction of extremely comfy chairs, the Student Center Coffeehouse continues to be unprofitable, causing MIT to shut it down. Students cry, petitions are signed, and the inflatable tennis bubble bursts.

In California, Richard Hovan '03 makes Tech proud by winning a dinette set and a vacation package on *The Price Is Right* showing that the four years at the Insitute teaches you valuable lessons which will come in handy when it comes time to furnish your bedroom with a tasteful selection of furniture complete with an attractive woman in a one-piece.

In related news, only 16 teams meet qualification for the 6.270 competition causing many competitors to complain about the difficulties of scoring at all that year. The competition was then definitively won by Rhett Creighton '03 and Victor Brar '04 who proceeded to smash their robot into the ground, strip off their jumpsuit, and make out with a female member of the audience. Seriously... you can't even make this stuff up.

February

MIT adds SpamAssassin filtering to e-mail. Most notably, the phrase “roaring penguin” is added to every e-mail, which doesn't really mean anything to anyone except me because I'm weird like that. The number of freshmen declaring course VI as their primary major drops dramatically, signaling to many critics that there might be hope for the human race after all.

Proving that e-mail is the preferred Institute language-of-love, a disturbingly large number of MIT students sign up for a Valentine's online dating service for Harvard, MIT, and Wellesley students. I get set up with Jewish women in their mid-twenties. None of them are interested, which is just fine because just then nature drops a ridiculous amount of snow on the city of Cambridge breaking the snowfall record dating back to 1893. The Institute is closed for the first time in 74 years, people make snowmen, and the inflatable tennis bubble bursts.

The class of 2005 premiere's its brass rat which features, and I'm not making this up, a drowning man on the bezel and a tombstone on the side. “At least it's not masturbating” one student was quoted as saying.

What students didn't realize is that the design was only narrowly selected over another

design depicting the severed head of a rush-chair and a man hanging from a tree signifying nothing at all, really, just added to look wicked awesome in the new “ultra-metal-black” ring finish option... with spikes.

March

Due to content provider bankruptcy, MIT Cable is no longer able to show popular channels such as MTV, ESPN, Playboy, and CNN. Left with a largely international selection of television channels, domestic students come exceedingly close to actually watching soccer, but decide to turn off the television instead. United States invades Iraq, causing several hundred students to walk out of their classes and mill about in Kresge Oval. Unfortunately, their walk-out coincides exactly with a significantly larger walk-out protesting TEAL. Campus activism reaches an all-time high.

Deciding that no student body should be without the news during a time of war, the Housing Office decides to bay for basic channels on MIT Cable. In addition to fair and balanced programming such as FOX News, the new line-up features Cartoon Network and TNT but conspicuously lacks anything relating to sports or music. It does, however, continue to carry the Weather Channel and the NASA channel, which feature elevator music and, on occasion, use subliminal nudity during sweeps season.

April

Fed up with the international press's obsession with his research rather than his hair, Steven Pinker leaves MIT for Harvard. The MIT administration freaks out and renegotiates its contract with Noam Chomsky, promising him “booze, babes, drugs... whatever you want, just as long as you stay.” ATO holds a wild and crazy party as incentive for Chomsky to stay, but things go terribly wrong and Chomsky is spotted the next day naked in J.P. Licks lecturing the worker behind the counter about how Ethiopia's child molestation laws are worsening the plight of the spotted owl in the Northwest. MIT levies 2-year sanctions on ATO despite Chomsky's defense that the party was “wicked awesome.”

In other news, the beta testing of the Microsoft sponsored ShuttleTrack service is finished, allowing me to miss both the Tech Shuttle and SafeRide by a narrower margin of time. In order to receive funding, the group is required to have the website crash if users leave their browser open for more than 30 minutes.

May

In what is now reverently referred to as the “outage of '03”, e-mail server po11 goes down for 27 hours. Desolate students turn to MIT Medical in record numbers and are promptly diagnosed as suffering from a fractured tibia. Ha ha, just kidding — actually they all got referred to the Massachusetts Eye and Ear Infirmary. Anyways, there's are major clashes between e-mail haves and have-nots and digitally insensitive signs such as “po14 sucks smtp” appear in the Infinite corridor. Just as the campus is at the point of breakage I/S fixes the problem and ends the “longest mail server outage ever.”

In a scandal that rocks inboxes all across campus, the 2004 class President and Vice President resign after admitting that their campaign platform was plagiarized. Upon review, it turned out the platform in question was really just the phrase “All work and no play make Jack a dull boy” repeated over and over again. An internal review into the situation revealed that this egregious lapse in ethics was not detected due to the fact that not a single soul had read the platform prior to the resignation. A further study into the election process revealed that the mechanics behind the UA online voting system are based primarily on code used by

AmIHotOrNot.com and *Friendster.com*.

The 2004 President is then accused of plagiarizing his apology-for-platform-plagiarism. Seriously, you just can't make this stuff up.

June

Cambridge decides to ban bar/restaurant smoking. There is no immediate campus reaction to this news since nobody reads *The Tech* during June except for the Seniors and they're all leaving anyways.

July

MIT Police and Department of Facilities confiscate a raft built by EC for viewing the Fourth of July fireworks on the Charles. The administration cites the questionable safety of any sea-faring vessel created entirely out of used computer parts picked up off of reuse.

This raft incident reminds MIT of its long-standing policy that MIT students are curious but dimwitted creatures whose nature warrants extended study, prompting the card office to begin implanting RFID chips in MIT cards for tracking. Preliminary data reveals a number of key insights into student life such as the large dependency of mate locality in student breeding patterns. Jonathan A. Goler is asked to remove the large Israeli Flag from his window, sparking the not-so-infamous “Flag controversy.” People get really excited about flags and have meetings, but in the end everyone agrees that it's not as interesting as the upcoming “Ghetto Party controversy” so they save all of their jokes until then.

August

The Man (RIAA) sues The Man (MIT) over the identity of a musical pirate who is believed to live in TDC. MIT says “Ah yeah? You and what army?” and blows a big raspberry at the RIAA. The RIAA goes off to find an army. The MIT Emergency Medical Service gets a new ambulance. This isn't really newsworthy except that every emergency medical technician just will not shut up about how absolutely wonderful their new ambulance is. Seriously. It's like an elliptical machine, bread maker, and iPod all wrapped up in one for these people, and still they continue to leave it parked outside of New House with the engine running.

The 2004 Class Secretary and Social Chairs both resign, leaving the class of 2004 with serious abandonment issues. One decides to run for Class President while the other moves back to California just in time to run in the Gubernatorial election there. Arnold Schwarzenegger quickly takes the lead in both races.

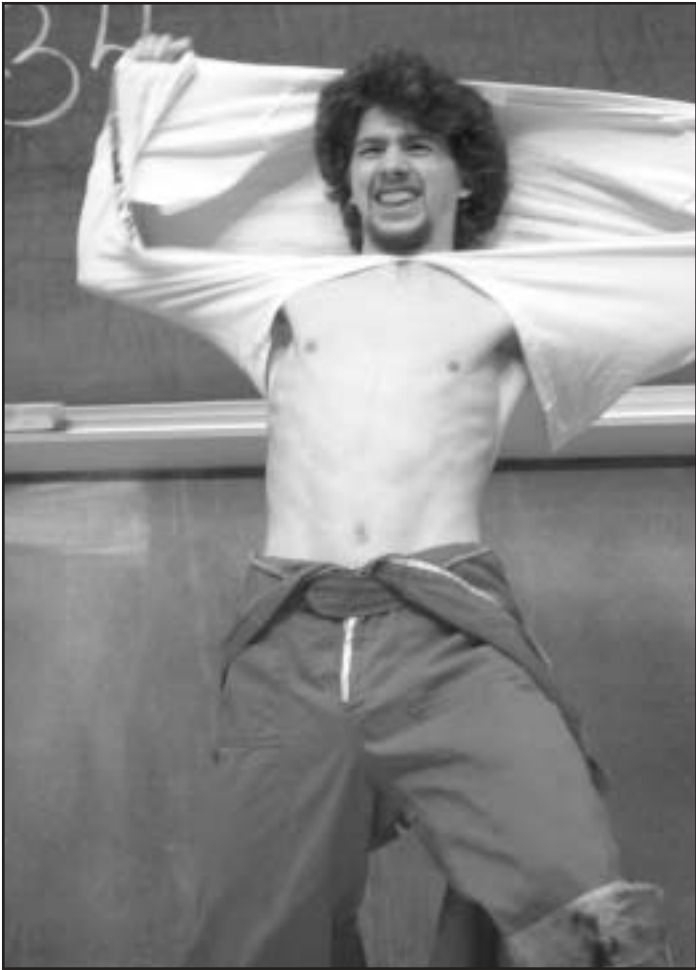
September

The RIAA finally rounds up an army and so MIT reveals that the alleged pirate is, in fact, a monkey with a typewriter. “Typewriters don't even have sound cards,” the MIT press office giggles. The RIAA sends in their chief agent, the Dalai Lama, to campus on a fact finding mission but he ends up in Kresge Auditorium with Richard Gere and a huge picture of what looks like a poorly drawn duck.

ATO is blamed despite His Holiness's assurance that “the party was hoppin' and the ladies were all over my fly orange toga.” The duck is never found. In a radical political upset, the class of 2004 fails to elect a man whose platform hinges on the fact that he has not masturbated since sophomore year. Arnold Schwarzenegger, however, is elected Governor of California. Soon after this round of class elections, the newly-elected class Vice President flees the country, forever scarring the senior class and leaving them emotionally unable to commit to anyone for another 23 years.

October

Erik Demaine — who is a nice guy, an assistant professor, and about eight months older than me — wins half a million dollars



TECH FILE PHOTO
RHETT AND WILD - Rhett Creighton G “Brars all” after the 2003 6.270 autonomous robot competition.

for being a hell of a lot smarter than pretty much anyone. Erik reveals that he will use the grant to “visit colleagues and do collaborative work in Hawaii.” Although his comments during his *Tech* interview were modest in nature, it is reported that he was prone to use the phrase “bling bling” when speaking “off the riz-ecord.” A bunch of students in EC send out an e-mail advertising an event referred to the “Ghetto Party,” sparking administrative backlash over the language used in the e-mail. MIT releases an official press release condemning the e-mail and making it explicitly clear that free speech will not be tolerated if it has to do with race. Frankly, that makes everyone in the administration pee in their collective pants.

Stuck without a particular frat to blame and tired of picking on ATO all the time, MIT decides to kick DKE out of its house for a year.

November

Not pleased with the testimony offered by the monkey and the lack of files found on the typewriter, the RIAA swears its revenge on the student body. After a little laundry work it is discovered that MIT's free love and music program, LAMP, is actually using music bought off a homeless guy in Seattle who swore he had the legal clearance to sell the music for broadcasting. Naturally this lead to much pant pissing and LAMP is forced to be taken off the, uhm, cable, and students are forced to stick it to the man the way they were doing before — by eating babies without ketchup. The bastards.

Sloan decides to offer an undergraduate minor so that people can take management degrees with subjecting themselves to the normal load of public ridicule that Sloan majors are accustomed to. The administration cites the move as a push to improve Sloan's image not so much through fine-tuning of curriculum but increasing the quality of students.

December

The Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority jacks up fares. Not only do subway tickets get bumped up to \$1.25, but bus fares are raised to 91.4 cents. “If the British can have half-pennies we can damn well have two-fifths of a cent” the MBTA head was quoted as saying. The new price raises were attributed to Boston's obsessive need to dig the biggest and most expensive hole on the face of the planet in the middle of a congested traffic area.

Amidst wild and crazy celebrations on the Eastern side of campus, Charles “Chucky” Vest announces his retirement as President of MIT. MIT reveals plans to replace the outgoing Vest with a technologically advanced machine from the future, which is our only hope for surviving a forthcoming and inevitable attack by the machines... as soon as he's done serving his term in California.

Well now, looks like another term, better warm up their typing fingers and send a highly amusing e-mail to sinking@mit.edu, now shouldn't I?



GOODWIN CHEN
Goodwin Chen '04 demonstrates that you can't beat a good campaign ad.

How to Eat Like an Asian

By Mark Liao

So I was sitting back home in California having dinner with a close friend and my mother. For those of you who've been to a Sam Woo, you know exactly what I'm talking about when I say there's nothing in Boston that even comes close. In any case, we get our appetizer, we order some fried noodles and whatnot, and then I start noticing something strange about my friend.

Josh is a pretty average guy, 6'1", lanky, girls say he's cute, but I guess what I'd never noticed about him before was that, well, he's white.

And that's when it hit me. All of my life I've been the white-washed twinkie who's pee-colored Volvo was a stark contrast against the black Civics. My cell phone never played "Big Pimpin'," nor did it have dangling penguins hanging from its antennae. The only time I had bleached tips was when I played too much water polo in the sun. However, the most fundamental part of my body stayed true to form, my taste buds.

As the meal continued, the more and more I noticed how inherently different I was from the white boy sitting across the table. He shirked at the thought of fried squid tentacles, was shocked that you had to peel your own shrimp (and the fact that they had heads with eyes and everything still attached), and took all the meat in the kung pao chicken leaving nothing but a few peanuts and dried chilies (which I later was able to convince him were fine to eat).

Everything else about us was pretty much the same. We both watched Ed on NBC religiously. We love a double-double from In-N-Out animal style with no tomatoes or dill pickles. Hell we even bought the same \$3.99 polka dot boxers from the Gap (independently of one another). But now I felt as if I was sitting at dinner with some hitchhiker I picked up from Shreveport, Louisiana.

And that's when I came to the conclusions that something had to be done. It's pretty obvious that there are *a lot* of Asians at MIT. But even though we have a student population comprised roughly of 30 percent Asians, it's quite shocking that we have a shortage of people who are knowledgeable about Asian food.

Just yesterday I was sitting with a freshman who asked me if I liked eating "sa-shoe-mee." After staring blankly at her for three minutes I realized what she meant to say was sashimi (sa-she-mee). I have another half-Taiwanese half-Chinese friend who doesn't like to eat porridge. And if you've read this far in this article and have *no* clue why that's such a big deal, you're also part of the problem.

I guess what I'm picturing with this article is a series of informative exposés diving into the depths of gourmet Pan-Asian cuisine complete with ingredient synopsizes, word origins, and complete a complete chef genealogy.

Or, you can expect the basics like, what's really good, what to look for, how much to pay, and whatnot. However, I would be lying if I said I didn't dream of one day publishing these articles in a book and selling it at Urban Outfitters for \$16.95 tucked between "Everybody Poops" and "Boys are Stupid ... Throw Rocks at Them."

I'm not trying to claim that I have the same level of authority as Ming Tsai (you know ... the guy from "East Meets West" ... yes I am a Food Network whore) or that guy on "Yan Can Cook" (with the annoying infomercials ... grrrr being alone on Saturday nights in high school). I am certainly not as knowledgeable as your Nai Nai or Po Po. Some of the things I say may be completely wrong or quite frankly, might offend many people. But that's not the point of these articles.

I'm writing these for that Asian kid, who, like me, was born outside of the United States (FOB mark and all) but can't order like their parents and instead is stuck eating beef with broccoli for the umph-teenth time. I'm writing these for that white dude who's going out with an Asian girl and has to eat dinner with her parents and doesn't want to appear like a dingus. And yes, I'm writing for all the ABCs out there, who worry that someday, their kids will think they can handle hardcore Asian cuisine because they can order hot-and-sour soup and know *not* to put soy sauce on white rice. Good people I give you ... my column.

Ask Nutty B

By Nutty B
FEATURES COLUMNIST

Nutty B has returned to the building! After stuffing himself with loads of candies and drowning himself with Molson Canadian beer during the holidays, he has again returned! You know the drill!

Nutty B is currently a graduate student at MIT. Please e-mail him with whatever question you would like someone to listen to and help him have an excuse to procrastinate at 3 a.m. Please send all questions to askNuttyB@yahoo.com.

Dear Witty B,
I need some advice. I find in the latest Tech, a busy graduate student who devotes a few hours a week to writing a very funny column that provides advice on problems plaguing the MIT student. I appreciate and commend her efforts to introduce intentional humor to the Tech.

However, it appears that some students have misconstrued her column as a source for advice on problems of a more serious nature, such as depression and low self-esteem.

The columnist's response, in accordance with her lighthearted and self-deprecating character, unfortunately reads as curt and insensitive. How can I ask her to, when necessary, save her readers' feelings now and her jokes for later?

— Hurt@MIT

Dear Hurt@MIT,
First of all, thanks for calling me "Witty B!" I guess I just found another good quality of mine I hadn't discovered!

How can you ask her? Simple, you go to Nutty B and let Nutty B help you solve your puzzle and ease your pain. Son, only the truth will set you free!

This columnist you mentioned in your question really does seem like a good one. I mean, with all the humors and compliments you have paid her, she does seem to know what she is doing. You mentioned you think some students have misconstrued her column as a source for advice, but darling, if she writes an advice column, I am sure she means to give out advice! I haven't met any political columnists who only write about musicals and arts!

Moreover, you said this columnist was "lighthearted" and "self-deprecating", but she appeared to be insensitive. However, if the only person she is "deprecating" is her "self" and she doesn't mind, how does she become insensitive? Perhaps you are concerned about her well-being? Or ... perhaps you simply misunderstand her.

You see, it's quite important to keep an open mind and try to look at the positive side of everything. MIT is a very diverse community

and it's like a big ocean where different streams of water bodies merge together. Everyone is bound to be different from everyone else. For a half glass of water, some people would say it's half-full, but some would call it half-empty.

For the same gesture in some culture it's consider polite, but in some it's offensive. Maybe when you think she is hurting her readers' feelings, the original readers who sent her the questions thought she has answered their questions and won their hearts. After all, if she has people who keep coming to ask her questions, she shouldn't be that evil, should she?

My advice for you is to try to think positively. You will face many problems everyday, and if you turn everything against yourself, the only person getting hurt will be yourself. Now, go out and smile to yourself and instead of thinking yourself as "Hurt@MIT," I want you to see yourself as "Blessed@MIT!"

Hi Nutty B,
Why is the Charles River green when it's frozen? It's really freak-ing me out!

— Steve

Dear Steve,
For some reason, quite a few people I know asked me the same question before the holidays. I did wonder if the environmental groups at MIT have tracked me down and started to stalk me! At any rate, being a dedicated advice columnist, between my holiday Canadian bacon eating and igloo cleaning, I decided to perform some experiments and consult a few friends of mine to see if I could come up with an answer for you.

To see why the Charles turned green I tried to determine what's in the river first. One of Nutty B's best friends Miss Slowdah, who is an avid rower on the Charles and brilliant biologist, came to the rescue and told me with confidence that the Charles is full of sewage, garbage, and sometimes bodies of ... well, different animals.

Therefore, I mixed some water with leftover food, some unknown solids I picked up from a random garbage can on campus, and some raw meat from the supermarket (for the animal corpse) in a big test beaker (of course without my advisor's knowledge) and let it sit there for a week. To imitate the actual environment, I varied the temperature around the beaker, too. After a week I froze the "thing", and guess what? Voila! A stinky frozen green-yellowish solid!

Nevertheless, there is no need to panic, my dear Steve! As long as you don't plan on drinking from the river directly or go in for a swim, you will be fine! Hope you have recovered from your traumatic Charles incident!

What's Next?

By Ian J. Ybarra

We are at one of the most prestigious academic institutions in the world. We walk the same halls and sit in the same classrooms as our predecessors — women and men who went on to invent technologies, found organizations, discover and explain complex phenomena, lead teams, author powerful books, and counsel chiefs of the most powerful states in the world. (None have actually become President of the United States, but U.N. Secretary-General isn't too shabby.) We study the work of Nobel Laureates while sitting a few feet from Nobel Laureates.

So MIT alumni, faculty, and affiliates have done great things. But who's next?

We are. We were invited to MIT from all over the globe because we demonstrated excellence in classrooms and laboratories and on stages and fields. In this intellectual community, we sow seeds with much potential to sprout future success. And already, there are signs of a great harvest ahead.

Take, for example, Kristin B. Domike '03. As an undergraduate in Professor Christine Ortiz's research group, she began designing a new endotracheal tube that could help prevent millions of injuries to people who require breathing assistance during medical procedures.

Or consider John A. Reyes '06, who is

starting a college preparatory summer program at his high school in La Marque, TX, to provide kids in his hometown with opportunities he didn't have.

How about Danny A. Nunez '06? A gifted mechanical engineer, he will soon be listed as one of the few people on a Ford Motor Company patent for an engine oil-efficiency device that might be installed in Ford's entire fleet.

Along with the honor of carrying the torch in the next leg of the relay, we accept a new challenge. For the first time in our lives, we have to face the full force of the question: "What's Next?"

Since we took our first baby steps about two decades ago, our paths have been dictated by the education system we were born into. In the United States, it goes something like this: kindergarten at age five (plus or minus one year), junior high, high school for grades nine through twelve, and then college. Sure, we enjoyed some freedom in selecting a university, but in the big picture, four years at Harvard, Stanford, or MIT are really the same diet of lectures, homework, exams, and grades.

While deciding what's next for ourselves, we must remember there are no "right" or "wrong" answers. However, there *are* "wrong" questions. They begin, "Should I ..." Wrong. The only thing you *should* do is not ask that kind of question. There are too many people who are too eager to tell us what we *should*

do. Besides, we'll always receive that advice, whether we ask for it or not. I can hear it now: "Susie, you should be more like your sister. She got a \$2,000 raise for working every weekend last year."

"Johnny, I don't care if you like drawing. You should get your Master's in chemistry."

To find *our own* answers that will make us happy and proud, we must begin questions with "Do I want to ..." We must do this for both the standard (e.g. Do I want to get an internship or do research this summer? And when I graduate, do I want to attend grad school or go to work?) and the offbeat (e.g. Do I want to sell all of my possessions, go live with Buddhist monks for two years, and write a book about my experiences?).

Before this academic term ends we have three and one-half months to enjoy the simple pleasure of not needing to have every little thing under control. As a senior, I understand the temptation to just attend classes, turn in a few pages of chicken scratch that pass for problem set solutions, and rest assured that if we do nothing else, there will still be many people who will think we're amazing simply because we go to MIT.

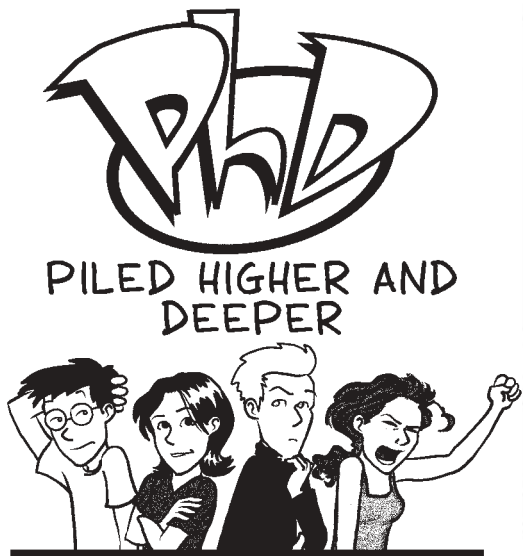
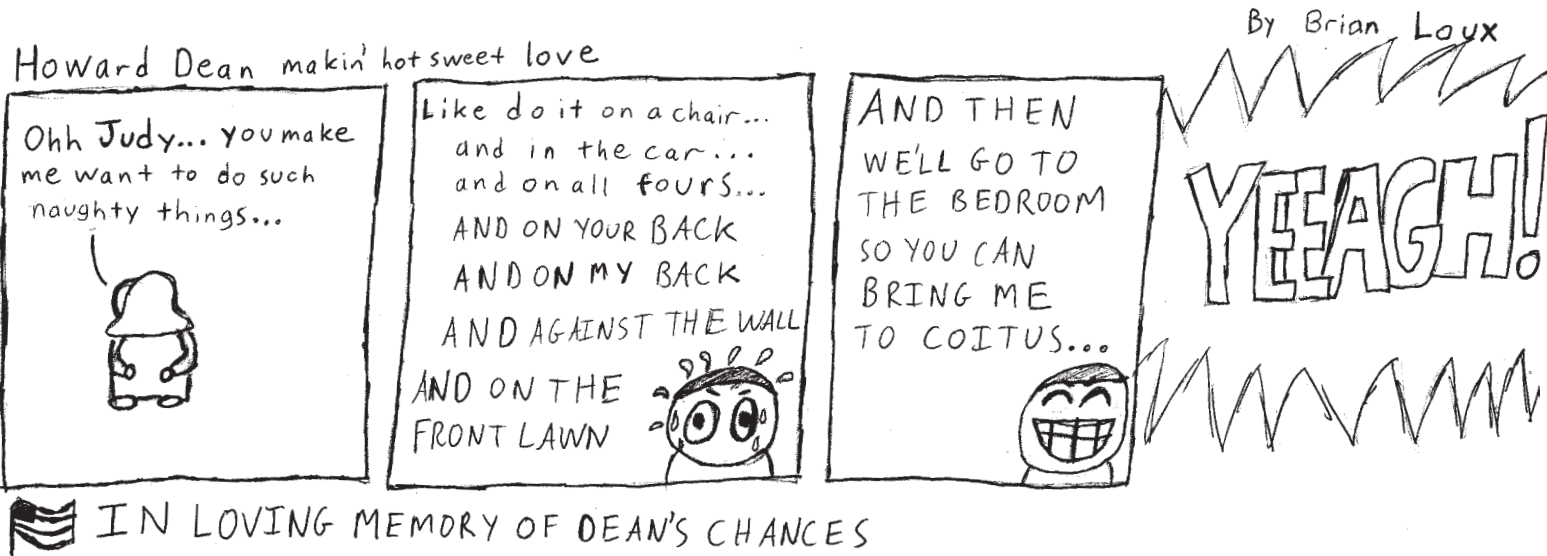
Let's not settle for that. Let's take time to decide what's next for ourselves — something that makes us happy and proud and, perhaps, remarkable enough for other MIT students to talk about in the future.



Something to feel good about.

United Way

This space donated by *The Tech*



Crossword Puzzle

Solution, page 14

ACROSS

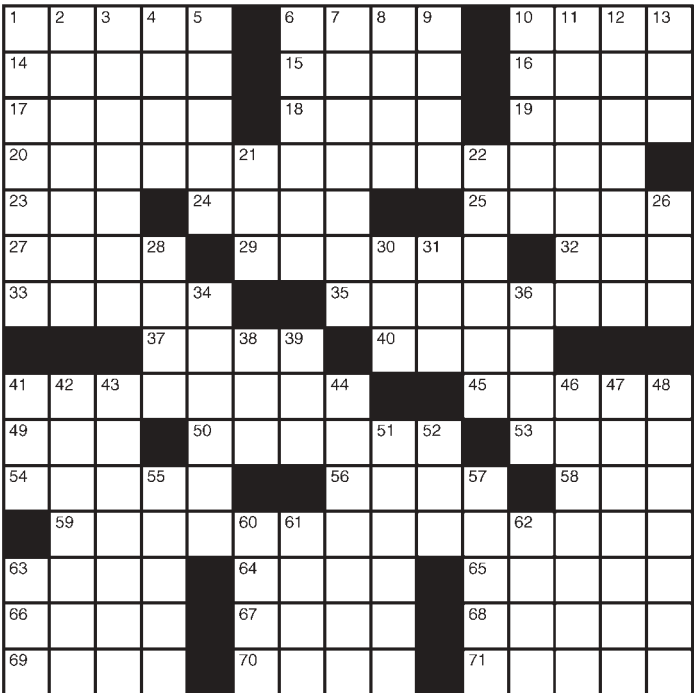
- 1 Richmond's river
- 6 St. Louis landmark
- 10 Local yokel
- 14 In pieces
- 15 Gilpin of "Frasier"
- 16 Grandson of Eve
- 17 Illegal act
- 18 Indigo dye
- 19 "Back in Black" rockers
- 20 The whole thing?
- 23 ___ favor, senior
- 24 Honolulu's island
- 25 Exploiters
- 27 Underground assets
- 29 Legendary Giant
- 32 Two-time loser to DDE
- 33 Ocean motions
- 35 Everything
- 37 Small particle

- 40 Long, narrow cut
- 41 All out
- 45 Masonic doorkeeper
- 49 Saturn model
- 50 Hale and hearty
- 53 Tractor-trailer
- 54 New to the game
- 56 Image of a god
- 58 Bridge action
- 59 All-inclusive
- 63 "Nana" star
- 64 Translucent gem
- 65 Atoll foundation
- 66 "___ kleine Nachtmusik"
- 67 Subdivision division
- 68 Govt. bond
- 69 Barracks beds
- 70 Husky sound
- 71 Wind indicators

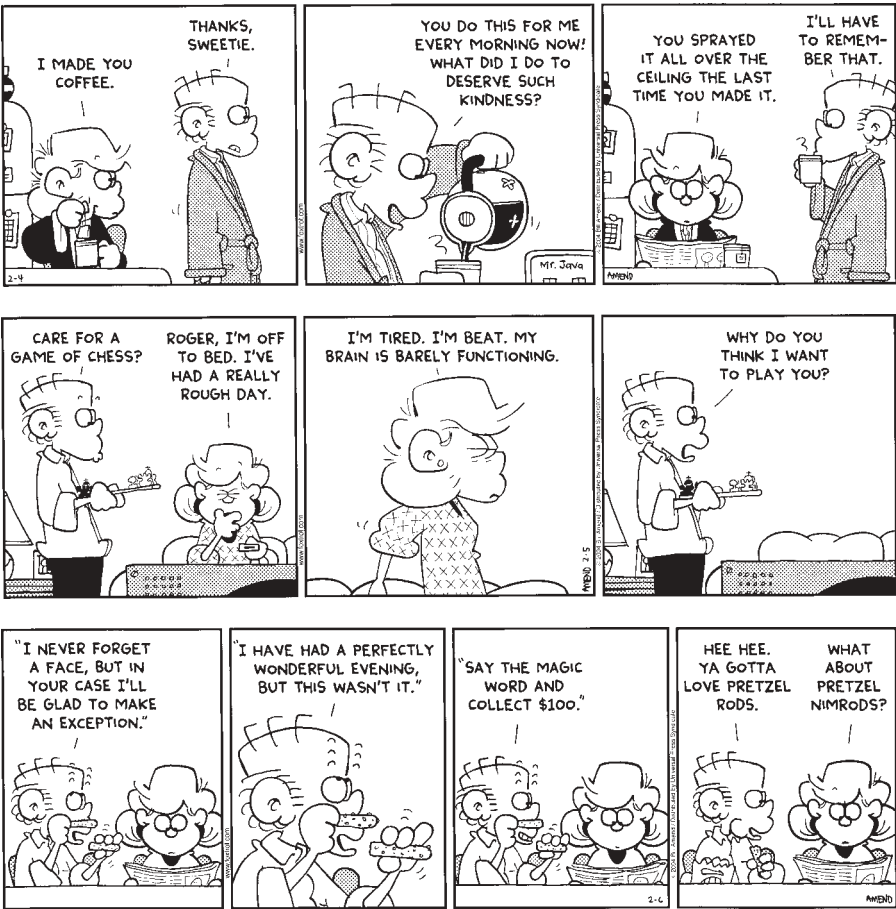
DOWN

- 1 Big payoff
- 2 Deductive
- 3 Restaurant employee
- 4 Ms. Bombeck
- 5 Secretarial skill
- 6 Cochise or Geronimo
- 7 French auto maker
- 8 Baby's bed
- 9 Hawaiian city
- 10 Enjoys a novel
- 11 Fuzzy
- 12 "10" star
- 13 PC key
- 21 Beaver project
- 22 Surpass in cunning
- 26 Air-leak sound
- 28 Tight closure
- 30 Expressions of surprise

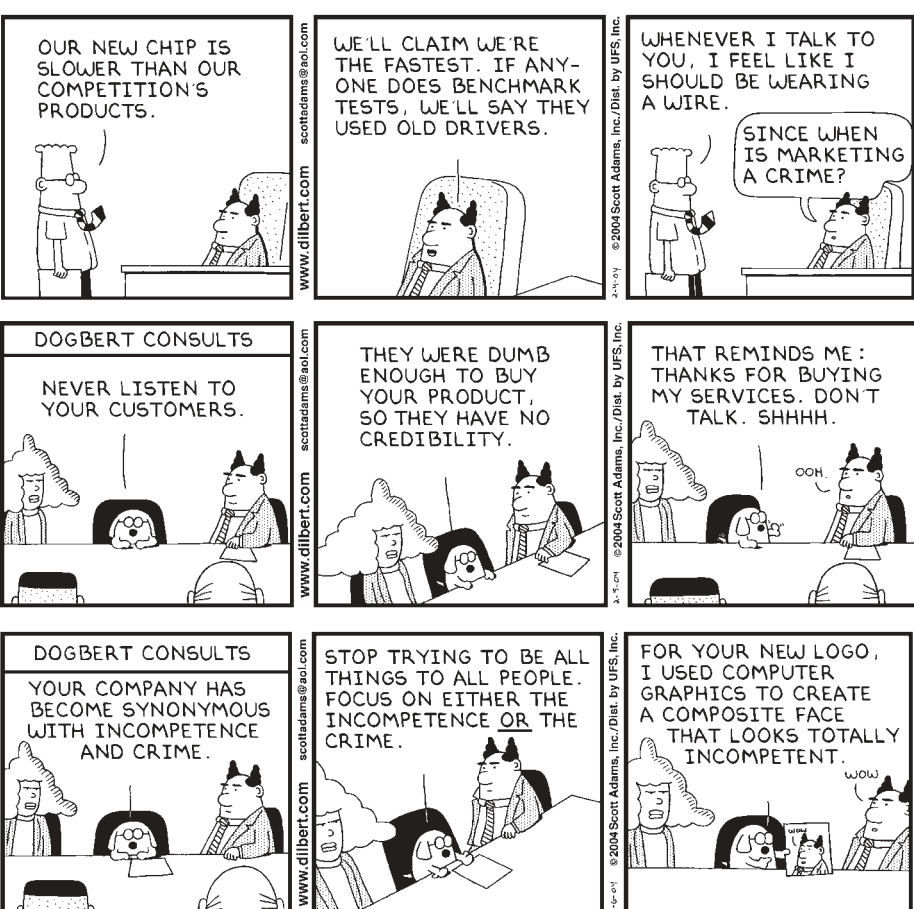
- 31 Part of GTE
- 34 Buffet tray warmer
- 36 Singer Redding
- 38 Ah, I see!
- 39 Unruly crowd
- 41 Purchased hair
- 42 Friend of Hamlet
- 43 Penny's worth
- 44 Clapton's axes
- 46 Former Chrysler model
- 47 Abu Dhabi or Fujairah
- 48 Conundrums
- 51 Lug laboriously
- 52 Shoe's tip
- 55 Sea eagles
- 57 "Law & Order" network
- 60 Skyrocket
- 61 Shelter for strays
- 62 One of the Chaplins
- 63 Part of a min.



FoxTrot by Bill Amend



Dilbert® by Scott Adams



Events Calendar

Events Calendar appears in each issue of *The Tech* and features events for members of the MIT community. *The Tech* makes no guarantees as to the accuracy of this information, and *The Tech* shall not be held liable for any losses, including, but not limited to, damages resulting from attendance of an event. Contact information for all events is available from the Events Calendar web page.

Visit and add events to Events Calendar online at <http://events.mit.edu>

Friday, February 6

12:00 p.m. - 1:00 p.m. – Writers Group. New writers are invited to join our weekly Writers Group (sponsored by the Writing and Communication Center). Share a piece of your writing with other supportive writers. Open to all MIT students, staff, faculty, and spouses. Free. Room: 14N-417. Sponsor: Writing and Communication Center.

12:00 p.m. - 1:00 p.m. – ACDL Seminar. Development of a Higher-Order DG Multigrid Solver for Aerodynamic Applications. Free. Room: 33-206. Sponsor: AeroAstro.

12:00 p.m. - 1:00 p.m. – FileMaker User Group. Meeting of the MIT FileMaker User Group. Free. Room: N42 Demo Center. Sponsor: Information Systems, MIT User Groups.

2:30 p.m. - 3:30 p.m. – Asymptotic Analysis of Flow in Reactive Porous Media and Motion of a Sphere Close to a Boundary. Special Physical Mathematics Seminar. Free. Room: 2-338. Sponsor: Physical Mathematics Seminar.

3:00 p.m. - 4:30 p.m. – SSL Seminar (Dave Miller/Ray Sedwick). SSL Movie Day — Dave Miller to welcome students for the Spring 2004 semester. Free. Room: 37-212. Sponsor: AeroAstro.

3:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m. – Eloranta Awards Presentation. The 2003 Eloranta Fellowship Award Recipients will give presentations on the final results of their projects. Question and Answer sessions will follow. Free. Room: 4-270. Sponsor: Office of Academic Services.

4:00 p.m. - 5:30 p.m. – 'Tute lbGt Ice cream Friday (TGIF). This spring-term tradition is an opportunity for LGBT and friendly folks from all over campus to meet, socialize, network, and, most importantly, have ice cream and cookies. Come now before the term work piles up!. Free. Room: Rainbow Lounge (50-306). Sponsor: lbgt@mit.

4:00 p.m. – BCS Colloquium - Daeyoul Lee, Ph.D. Talk Title: "Game Theory, Decision Making, and Prefrontal Cortex." Free. Room: E25-117. Sponsor: Brain and Cognitive Sciences. Hosted by Sebastian Seung.

4:15 p.m. - 5:15 p.m. – Completely Positive Matrices, Graphs with No Long Odd Cycles and Graphs with No Short Odd Cycles. Refreshments at 3:30 PM in Room 2-349. Free. Room: Room 2-338. Sponsor: Combinatorics Seminar. Department of Mathematics.

6:00 p.m. – Shabbat Services & Dinner. Celebrate Shabbat. MIT Hillel's three religious communities hold Shabbat services at 6:00 p.m. (Conservative, Orthodox, and Reform). A community Shabbat dinner follows at 7:00 p.m. Cost for dinner only. Room: Religious Activities Center (W11). Sponsor: Hillel, MIT.

6:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m. – Vassilopita. The Hellenic Students Association is cutting the traditional Vasilopita (New Years Pie). We will watch the Greek movie "Ayth h Nyxta Menei" ("This night remains", PG-13). Refreshments will be served. Free. Room: 4-237. Sponsor: Hellenic Students' Association, GSC Funding Board.

6:00 p.m. - 7:30 p.m. – GCF Large Group Fellowship Meeting. Come for worship, a stimulating talk, fellowship, and snacks. Free. Room: Student Center Twenty Chimneys (W20-306). Sponsor: Graduate Christian Fellowship, GSC Funding Board.

7:00 p.m. - 11:59 p.m. – MIT Anime Club Weekly Showing. The MIT Anime Club shows the best of both recent and classic Japanese animation. Showings are open to the public. Free. Room: 6-120. Sponsor: Anime Club, MIT, UA Finance Board.

7:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m. – Board Buys Shabbat Dinner. Join the new Hillel student board for a free kosher Shabbat Dinner. Free. Room: W11 Main Dining Room. Sponsor: Hillel, MIT, UA Finance Board.

7:00 p.m. - 9:30 p.m. – ACF Large Group meeting - topic TBA. Worship, teaching, discussion, food, fun! Prayer meeting at 6pm.

All are welcome!. Free. Room: McCormick Brown Living Room. Sponsor: Asian Christian Fellowship.

7:30 p.m. - 9:00 p.m. – Bible Study. Is there more to life than grad school? We believe the answer is "YES!". Come study the word of God with us. There will be dinner provided and games afterward. Free. Room: 1-150. Sponsor: Asian Baptist Student Koinonia Graduate Division, GSC Funding Board.

8:00 p.m. - 11:30 p.m. – Sangam Movies. Screening of popular movies. Please subscribe to sangam-request@mit.edu. Free. Sponsor: Sangam, GSC Funding Board.

8:00 p.m. – Bat Boy. MIT Musical Theatre Guild IAP production of the comic horror masterpiece by Laurence O'Keefe (music and lyrics) and Keythe Farley and Brian Flemming (book), about a half-boy, half-bat and the girl who loves him. \$10; \$8 MIT faculty, staff, seniors and student; \$6 MIT/Wellesley students. Room: Sala de Puerto Rico. Sponsor: Musical Theatre Guild, MIT.

8:00 p.m. - 11:00 p.m. – Portuguese Student Association Spring Dinner. Please join us for an evening of Portuguese cuisine. To register, please send an email to portugal-request@mit.edu. This event is sponsored by the GSC funding board. All graduate students are welcome. \$3. Room: TBA. Sponsor: Portuguese Student Association. GSC Funding Board.

8:00 p.m. – Company of Angels. February 5-7, February 12-14 IAP production. Play by Associate Provost for the Arts Alan Brody; directed by Senior Lecturer Michael Ouellette. \$8, \$6 students tickets available in Lobby 10 the week of performances or at the door. Room: Kresge Little Theater. Sponsor: Dramashop.

Saturday, February 7

1:00 p.m. - 2:30 p.m. – Graduate Christian Fellowship Bible Study. Currently studying the gospel of Luke. Free. Room: Edgerton Apt. 221. Sponsor: Graduate Christian Fellowship.

1:00 p.m. - 3:00 p.m. – Isshinryu Karate Workout. Traditional Okinawan Karate in a Small Club Environment. Free. Room: DuPont Exercise Room. Sponsor: Isshinryu Karate-do at MIT.

1:00 p.m. – Varsity Men's Basketball vs. Coast Guard. Free. Room: Rockwell Cage.

3:00 p.m. – Varsity Women's Basketball vs. Clark. Free. Room: Rockwell Cage.

5:00 p.m. - 1:00 a.m. – Tech Model Railroad Club Meeting. An informal meeting where we design and build the layout and run trains. Visitors welcome. Students welcome to join the club. (Club members go to dinner between 6:30 and 7:30, room may be empty at this time.). Free. Room: N52-118. Sponsor: Tech Model Railroad Club (TMRC).

7:00 p.m. – Varsity Men's Ice Hockey vs. Connecticut College. Free. Room: Johnson Ice Rink.

7:00 p.m. - 12:00 a.m. – Lantern Festival Performance and Dance Party. Wonderful performance by your fellow students from MIT (Xiao Pin and Xiang Sheng), also students from Harvard and University of Massachusetts, Lowell, plus guest performers. Dance party will follow immediately after the performance and water will be provided. Free for MIT students and their families. Free. Room: W20-208. Sponsor: Chinese Student and Scholar Association.

8:00 p.m. - 11:30 p.m. – Sangam Movie Special. Movie Screenings. Emails are typically sent out if you subscribe to sangam-request@mit.edu. Free. Room: 2-105. Sponsor: Sangam, GSC Funding Board.

8:00 p.m. - 11:00 p.m. – Patrol. Travel to strange new classrooms. Meet interesting, unusual people, and kill them! Patrol is a high-action game of live combat with rubber-dart guns. Shoot your friends, then watch out as they try to take their revenge. Free. Room: 36-115. Sponsor: Assassins' Guild, MIT.

Sunday, February 8

11:00 a.m. – Asha General Meeting. General meeting of Asha-MIT, the MIT chapter of "Asha for Education", a voluntary student organization which aims to catalyze socioeconomic change in India through education of underprivileged children. Free. Room: 4-253. Sponsor: ASHA-MIT.

8:00 p.m. - 11:00 p.m. – International Folk Dancing (participatory). International folk dancing. Teaching and beginners' dances from 8:00 to 9:00 pm. A mixture of all skill levels from 9:00 to 11:00. Our repertoire includes dances from Eastern Europe (Bulgaria, Romania, Serbia, Croatia, Greece, and others) as well as other parts of the world. Free for MIT/Wellesley students. Suggested donation of \$1 from others. Room: Lobby 13. Sponsor: Folk Dance Club.

Monday, February 9

12:00 p.m. - 1:00 p.m. – Dreamweaver Quick Start. Dreamweaver is a powerful tool for creating and managing complex web sites. This session introduces users to the Dreamweaver interface and gives a brief overview of web publishing practices at MIT. Free. Room: N42 Demo Center. Sponsor: Information Systems.

2:00 p.m. - 3:00 p.m. – Nuclear & Particle Theory Seminar. Glue-ball Regge Trajectories. Free. Room: Center for Theoretical Physics.

3:00 p.m. - 4:30 p.m. – Preparing for the Internship Search. Learn general information about internships such as: what is an internship, application deadlines, how do you find internships, when and where to look for internships, compensation and resources. All workshops require pre-registration. Register for workshops at <http://web.mit.edu/career/www/services/workshops.html>, select Calendar of Workshops. Free. Room: 56-114. Sponsor: Career Services Office.

3:30 p.m. - 5:30 p.m. – Choice of Major Fair. A great way for you to find out first hand information about MIT majors from fellow students that have taken the classes and looked for the UROP's. Information will focus on what classes to take, what UROP's to get, and what you can do with careers in each of the majors. Staff from the HASS office will be available to answer questions about the humanities requirements and concentrations. Free. Room: Sala de Puerto Rico. Sponsor: Academic Resource Center.

4:00 p.m. – Spring Biological Chemistry Seminar Series: Prof. Jon Clardy, Harvard. DNA-based approaches to small molecule discovery. Free. Room: 6-120. Sponsor: MIT Department of Chemistry.

7:00 p.m. – Varsity Men's Volleyball vs. Newbury. Free. Room: DuPont Gymnasium.

7:30 p.m. - 9:00 p.m. – Graduate Christian Fellowship Bible Study. Studying 1 John. Free. Room: Ashdown Lobby. Sponsor: Graduate Christian Fellowship.

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Fees Fund Classes, HFC Says

Center, from Page 1

My concern is that we are not getting advanced ones" through the traditional PE lottery system.

Cheng, however, said that she would accept a fee for the right reasons. "If it's reasonable, I would be willing to pay for a class. For instance, if we need equipment for

advanced kickboxing, I would be willing to pay a fee," she said.

Ko's husband, David M. Sachs G, who participated in the poster, said that, "I noticed that the signs were being taken down almost instantaneously. I suspect that I was being followed."

Sachs said that he e-mailed Candace L. Royer, director of athletics, about the incident on Tuesday, and said he has not yet received a response.

HFC explains role at Z center

On its web site, HFC, which has recently acquired a management contract with Duke University's athletics center, reports that it "consistently scores in the 98th percentile for client satisfaction and meets or exceeds overall member satisfaction."

The Department of Athletics, Physical Education, and Recreation website lists over 125 for-credit class offerings. Of the classes listed, well over 75 percent are available to registered students and Z center members for free. Some classes, like Scuba or Lifeguard Training, have always carried equipment fees. In addition, specialty classes and some group exercises now carry fees of \$30 or more.

Moore said that traditional PE group exercise classes do not carry a fee and that the free PE classes offered before HFC came to MIT will continue to be a mainstay of DAPER programming. Fee-based classes were developed "to expand the recreational opportunities offered to students" and other patrons, he said.

Moore said HFC negotiated with DAPER to ensure that students who wanted to take the newly developed group exercise or specialty classes would be able to receive PE credit.

"I think HFC is seen as a corporate entity and that's simply not accurate. My entire career has been in collegiate recreation and although there is a limited budget to provide new classes, HFC's goal has always been to develop activities at the most affordable cost for students and other Zesiger Center members," he said.

"Like most sport and fitness centers on college and university campuses, Zesiger Center revenues are generated through the sale of memberships and passes, student activity fees, locker and facility rentals, special events, and other program fees," Moore said.

Moore added that the HFC "developed incentive programs to cater to the needs of competitive, goal-oriented individuals at MIT." He listed as examples the Swim Across Cape Cod Day, the Zesiger Indoor Triathlon, and the upcoming Cardio Conquest incentive programs.

In addition to developing new fitness and aquatics programs, Moore said that the HFC also offers student employment opportunities. There are currently 40 active student workers and the Z Center is looking to hire more, particularly for a new position — group exercise monitors. These students workers will receive hourly wages as well as a free \$70 bonus pass.

"We routinely get input from our members and that informs everything that we do," Moore said.

Cost controversy not new

Disputes over athletic fees are not something new to the Z Center.

In the early stages of development, controversy arose with the establishment of a \$200 student life fee, which goes toward supporting the cost of the athletic facility as well as supporting other student life programs.

MIT staff members also saw their annual athletics center membership costs rise to \$375 from \$150. A faculty member who wished to remain anonymous said that she hoped the higher fees would not eliminate staff participation in athletic activities and that she would be upset if the classes that she liked were cancelled because staff could no longer afford to participate.

Despite general opposition, the compulsory student life fees and staff athletics center membership cost increases were instituted by MIT as of September 2002 and have remained ever since.

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Shorter Panhel Rush Yields 122 Bids, 114 Pledges

By Tongyan Lin
ASSOCIATE NEWS EDITOR

Bids were offered to 122 girls at the conclusion of MIT's sorority rush on Monday night, said Panhellenic Association vice president of recruitment Susie Lee '05. About 200 girls registered to participate in recruitment. Of the 122 bids, 114 were accepted.

Lee confirmed that there were 26 new members for Alpha Chi Omega, 28 new members for Sigma Kappa, 29 new members for Alpha Phi, 27 new members for Kappa Alpha Theta, and four new members for Alpha Epsilon Phi. Each girl who participated received a bid from only one sorority.

Sorority pledges up a quarter

About 25 percent more girls pledged this year than did last year, when 91 girls pledged, said Lee, although about the same number of

girls registered for recruitment. Last year was the first year Panhel recruitment occurred during IAP instead of at the beginning of the school year.

Lee said that one reason the number of bids accepted increased was that rush this year was half as long as last year's, so that fewer girls had dropped out at the end of rush than last year. In addition, the second weekend of rush last year occurred after classes began.

Lee also said that another potential reason that the number of bids was higher was because the members who coordinated recruitment made an effort to have more personal contact with the girls. They "called all the girls who didn't show up," she said.

Jessica B. So '05, recruitment chair for the Kappa Alpha Theta sorority, said she thought recruitment went very well. "We got a diverse class of girls," she said. She thought

the shorter recruitment period helped keep the energy and enthusiasm of the week high.

Lee thought that recruitment was

Sorority Pledge Numbers	
Sorority	Pledges
Alpha Chi Omega	26
Sigma Kappa	28
Alpha Phi	29
Kappa Alpha Theta	27
Alpha Epsilon Phi	4
Total	114

All numbers were confirmed by Panhel Vice President of Recruitment Susie Lee '05



SOURCE: PANHELLENIC ASSOCIATION



David Lin '06 speaks with a representative from Raytheon at the MIT Tau Beta Pi Career Fair in Rockwell Cage on Thursday. The fair was sponsored by Guidant, Deutsche Bank and Microsoft.

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Ishad Manji, Author of *The Trouble With Islam*
Itamar Marcus, Director, Palestinian Media Watch

Moderated by:

Jeff Robbins, President, WorldBoston

Thursday, February 12, 2004 at 7:30 PM
Harvard University
Emerson Hall, Room 105, 25 Quincy Street, Harvard Yard
For more information, please call 617-457-9574

Sponsored by Harvard Hillel, Harvard Students for Israel and the Jewish Campus Roundtable, co-sponsored by the Jewish Community Relations Council of Greater Boston, Combined Jewish Philanthropies and Hillel Council of New England, and including AFPC, American Jewish Committee, Anti-Defamation League, CAMERA, Council on American-Soviet Relations, The David Project, Hamaqatan, Middle East Partnership, JNF of North America, and U.S. 9/11 Memorial.

Other programs in the series include:

Panel #1: Civil vs. Uncivil Society: What Are The Consequences for Peace?
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Panel #3: Israel: Progress Toward a More Civil Society?
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(Separators for Panel #3 are not yet confirmed)
Thursday, March 11, 2004 • MIT

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Biomedical Optics Summer Institute

The Harvard-MIT Division of Health Sciences and Technology and the Wellman Laboratories of Photomedicine at Massachusetts General Hospital are pleased to announce a Biomedical Optics Summer Institute program, supported by the National Science Foundation and the National Institute of Health.

Open to fall 2004 juniors, seniors, and first-year graduate students, the Institute will focus on introducing participants to Biomedical Optics, the use of light in biology and medicine, by a combination of classroom work and laboratory research. Participants will advance their professional development through developing a peer and mentoring network and formal sessions on communication and biomedical ethics.

The program will run from June 16 to August 13, 2004. The stipend will be approximately \$300/week for undergraduate students and \$500/week for graduate students. Participants will be housed in MIT dormitories. Students must be sophomore, junior or senior undergraduates or first year graduate students at the time of application and must be United States citizens or have permanent residence status.

Application deadline: March 1, 2004
Application information available on the web at hst.mit.edu/biooptics

Health Costs Above Stanford's

Health, from Page 1

to protest the decreasing ability of graduate students to afford studying at Cambridge.

It is more than a health insurance issue, "it's a cost of living issue," he said.

The petition compares the costs of health plans at MIT, Harvard, Stanford and Princeton, and also shows the trend in cost of living for the past four years. It can be accessed at <http://petition.mit.edu>.

Based on a lower estimate for expenses from the Practical Planning Guide for Graduate Students available at <http://web.mit.edu/gso/Planguide.pdf>, over the past four years, the disposable income for graduate students had already been dropped significantly going into last year.

MIT's guideline for stipend levels for science research assistants has increased by \$6,360 from the 1999-2000 year to this year, however the cost of living increased by \$6,145 last year alone.

Extrapolating from the fact that the cost of living has increased by approximately 15 percent over the past two years, another 15 percent increase this year would put the average research assistant into about

	Academic Year			
	2003-2004*	2002-2003	2001-2002	2000-2001
Science RA Stipend	23760	22680	21600	18720
Cost:				
Housing	10971	9600	8400	7800
Food	7276	5760	4560	3720
Tax (at 17 percent)	4080	3856	3672	3182
Health Insurance	1440	900	768	696
Books	1032	920	820	750
Travel (with car)	914	800	700	260
Dental	450	300	200	150
Student Life Fee	200	200	200	0
Total Costs	26364	22336	19320	16558
Disposable Income	-2604	344	2280	2162

*Prediction based on percentage increase from 2001-2003.

\$2,600 of debt.

The actual contribution of health insurance to this rise in costs, however, is small compared to housing and food: the insurance premium rose by \$600 to this year, but a 15 percent increase on housing and food this year would equal a \$2,300 increase.

Other institutions subsidize plan

While the true cost of actually providing health care coverage is roughly equal for Harvard, MIT and Stanford, the fraction that is directly paid by the student varies significantly.

In the face of rapidly rising costs, for example, Stanford chose

in 2002 to subsidize 50 percent of the premium for graduate students earning more than \$2,000.

Thus while the unsubsidized premium costs \$1,728, most Stanford students pay only \$860.

Ann George, assistant dean for research and graduate policy at Stanford, said that Stanford funded the subsidy in part by increasing the cost of its students to research grants and fellowships and also using some funds provided by the Provost of the university.

The 50 percent subsidy, however, will not effectively keep costs down for much longer because the premium increased by 17 percent this year.

According to the petition, Harvard in some cases pays the entire fee for their graduate students. Abo-Shaeer said that this claim is based on talks with graduate students in the sciences at Harvard.

However, University Health Services Director David Rosenthal said that the subsidy varies across different schools within Harvard and that there is no overall Harvard policy.

Type of possible subsidy unclear

Offner said that the costs for next year would be discussed by a committee of students, including the Graduate Student Council, administrators, and physicians, and that it would weigh the trade-offs between expense and decreased coverage.

"We want to make it possible for students to be here comfortably," Colbert said. There is "not a whole lot of spare change going around."

Colbert said that there was currently no preferred method for subsidizing the health premium at MIT.

There are several possible ways that MIT might reduce the amount a student pays, such as including the premium in research grant costs, paying the costs out of endowment income, or increasing the graduate student stipend.

He said that MIT typically increased the student stipend instead of subsidizing the expense internally. However, because graduate student income is taxed by the government, this method has become increasingly inefficient as costs have risen.

During the current budget crunch, however, MIT has decreased its internal subsidy for graduate student tuition by 15 percent, making each student significantly more expensive to fund in a research grant.

Provost Robert A. Brown has said that MIT's graduate school is already among the most expensive in the nation.



Bat Boy (David C. Poland '04) begins to yield to his hunger for blood despite his desire to be civilized, during the Musical Theatre Guild's production of Batboy.

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- Baritone

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Solution to Crossword

from page 10

J	A	M	E	S		A	R	C	H		R	U	B	E
A	P	A	R	T		P	E	R	I		E	N	O	S
C	R	I	M	E		A	N	I	L		A	C	D	C
K	I	T	A	N	D	C	A	B	O	O	D	L	E	
P	O	R		O	A	H		U			U	S	E	R
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T	I	D	E	S		T	H	E	W	O	R	K	S	
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W	H	O	L	E	H	O	G				T	I	L	E
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G	R	E	E	N		I	C	O	N		B	I	D	
A	C	R	O	S	S	T	H	E	B	O	A	R	D	
S	T	E	N		O	P	A	L		C	O	R	A	L
E	I	N	E		A	C	R	E		T	N	O	T	E
G	O	T	S		R	A	S	P		V	A	N	E	S

Hedge Funds, Gifts, Weak Real Estate Lessen Endowment

Endowment, from Page 1

Bufferd said.

In a Jan. 25 *Boston Globe* story, Executive Vice President John R. Curry said that venture capital funds were the main cause of the slip in MIT's endowment funds.

Butterfield said that while venture capital loss “was clearly a factor in 2001 and 2002,” the decline has “bottomed out,” and did not effect the 2003 report in any major way. Currently, venture capital funds represent less than 10 percent of MIT’s total investments, he said.

Instead, Bufferd cited changes in types of gifts to the Institute, limited exposure to hedge funds, and the weak real estate market in Cambridge as possible causes for the 2003 decline. Also, while MIT has seen a positive return on investments in 2003, investment results were not as strong as those at peer institutions, he said.

Hedge funds typically earn income by investing against a predicted change in the value of a stock. That is, if you anticipate a stock to fall tomorrow, you can sell the stock today and buy it back when it becomes cheaper, yielding a profit. This can be practiced when the market is falling, or can be done on an international level, taking advantage of rising and falling currency rates.

While MIT received roughly the same amount in gifts in '02 and '03 (\$236 million in '02 and \$237 million in '03), the amounts designated for specific projects outside the endowment changed. Bufferd said that gifts received for the endowment were "significantly less" as compared to those in 2002 and "decreased by about \$50 million."

Gifts can be either designated for a specific purpose, such as a building project, scholarship funds, or research, or they can be contributed to the endowment, in the hopes that investment returns will fund a project.

"We're in the midst of a fairly major capital campaign which by many measures has been enormously successful," Bufferd said.

In addition to the changes in the nature of gifts, Bufferd said that MIT's limited exposure to hedge funds may have affected the endowment.

Bufferd said that the managers of MIT's endowment are using hedge funds, but less frequently than other universities.

In addition, the weak real estate climate in Cambridge has brought down income from MIT's land holdings, as both income from tenants and the appraisal value of real estate has slipped.

Officials hope to attain stability

Provost Robert A. Brown told *The Tech* in November that this should be the last year the endowment shows a downward slope, and that he expects it to grow in the next fiscal year.

"We made judgments that served us extremely well in the late 90's, but lately they haven't served us as well" as the stock market has suffered, said Alexander V. D'Arbeloff '49, former chair of the MIT corporation and member of MIT's Investment Committee.

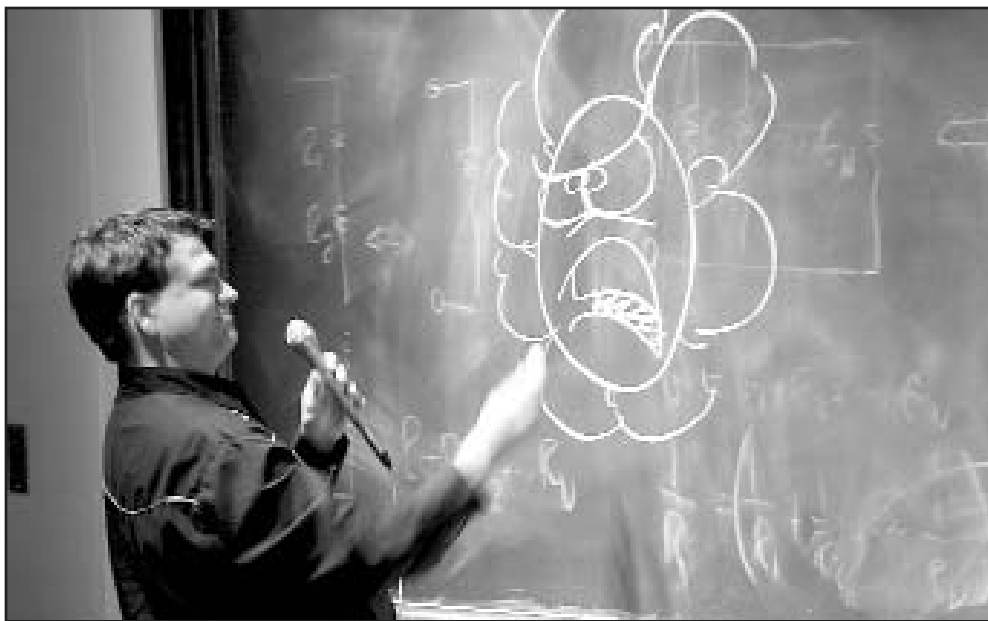
Bufferd said that the endowment was "up significantly" by roughly a few hundred million in December compared to last June. The market has been on an upward trend since March of last year, and MIT has mirrored that growth, he said.

There are still five months to go in the 2004 fiscal year, and much can transpire in that time, he said.

"It's always tough going

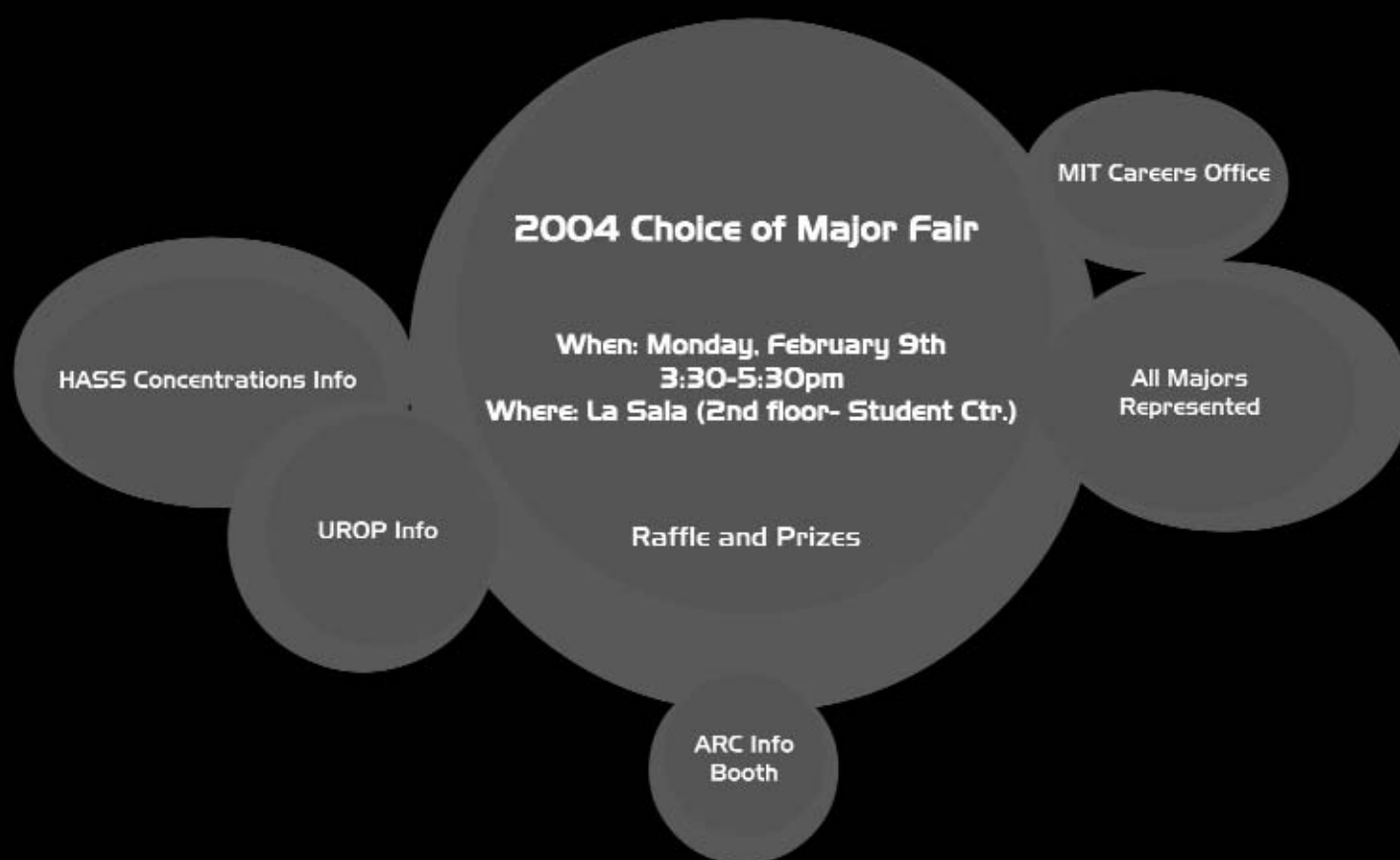
through market volatility, but all of us are very long-term investors, and we do come through these patches," Curry told the *Globe*.

The Institute's budget crunch prompted officials to close the school over winter break, freeze faculty and staff salaries, and to layoff approximately 250 MIT employees in an effort to save \$35 million. According to Provost Robert A. Brown, MIT expected to save \$10 million by freezing salaries. The amount of money saved by the holiday closures and layoffs is not yet available.



BEN GALLUP—THE TECH

Stephen Notley, creator of Bob the Angry Flower, draws his webcomic's titular character during Thursday's LSC "The New Funnies" webcomic panel — the first in a series of four.



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2003 Eloranta Awards Final Presentations:

Friday, February 6th 3:00 PM
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Bob Yin, '04 Biology

Growing Up in the Shadows of the Cultural Revolution: Short Fiction Inspired By Personal Histories

Maia Mahoney, '05 Electrical Eng. & Computer Science
A Biological Register: The Application of Site-Specific
Recombination for the Construction of Biological
Memory

Debora Lui, '03 Architecture & Management
Examining the Cycle of Influence Between Architecture
& Performance in the Twentieth Century Theater

Noramay J. Cadena, '03 Mechanical Engineering
"Through their Eyes Only: Unveiling the Person behind
the Stigma"

Anna Bershteyn, '06 Materials Science And Eng and
Kaia Dekker, '06 Physics
Traditional Life and Technological Change: Learning
from Dine Voices Across Generations

Monami Chakrabarti, '03 Sloan School of Management
Getting the Boss to Behave: A Comparative Study of
Trade Unions and Corporate Governance Reform in the
US and UK

Rabi Upadhyay, '03 Mathematics
Redefining Medicine: Modern Healthcare in the Third
World

All are welcome to attend.

Refreshments will be served following the presentations.

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For more information please visit: <http://web.mit.edu/eloranta/>

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**Housing Office Says
Demand Has Risen**

Lottery, from Page 1

during the IAP talk. "Also among the problems is the demand for first choice assignments versus the limited capacity and the continued efforts of MIT Housing to derive the lottery system with the fewest students being unhappy with where they were put."

Students who applied to the lottery had mixed reactions to the system. "It's not the best system,"

says Vincent Wu '06, "but it's the best they can do." Wu moved from Burton-Conner to East Campus in the fall.

"I moved from Burton-Conner for a change of social atmosphere," he said. "Burton-Conner didn't fit my personality. I was moving to a place not everybody wanted to move to, but it had a shorter waiting list, and there were a lot of rumors that it had better social atmosphere."

Dormitory Lottery Results*

Dormitory	# Moved Out	# Moved In
Baker	1	12
Bexley	0	3
Burton-Conner	17	6
East Campus	2	9
MacGregor	4	7
McCormick	3	3
New House	4	5
Next House	18	2
Senior	2	2
Simmons	9	11
Total	60	60

*7 people who entered the lottery could not move; they put down only one or two choices

SOURCE: TONY GRAY

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Proposals are reviewed on a monthly basis. Applications are to be received by the first school day of any month from October to May. Applicants will be notified of a decision by the middle of the month. For more information or an application, contact the Committee on Campus Race Relations at 3-1706, or racerelations@mit.edu.

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Are We Ready for a Minority President?

Natasha N. Rushing

Is the United States ready for a minority president?

It is very easy for people to immediately reply “yes” in response to this question. Yet, if our country is ready, then why has a minority candidate yet to survive the cuts of the party caucuses and primaries to receive the nomination? I venture to say that we are in denial of political inequalities, and the realization of a minority president is nowhere in the near future. There are many things in this country that we overlook that may be holding back our electoral process from reaching its full potential envisioned by our forefathers of representing all citizens of this country. Let us look at the primary example of African-americans in national public offices.

First, the time elapsed since the end of blatant racial discrimination in this country is equivalent to an eye blink in the span of history. Slavery in America, which ended approximately 140 years ago in 1865, was in place for over 250 years. If you consider the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. as the end of the civil rights movement, then there have only been 36 years between then and now. Despite the american ideal that any person can “make it

to the top” with hard work, I find it very improbable that a man can rise from the dregs of society to one of the most reputable positions in the world in the time span of only 36 years.

Secondly, the number of blacks in Congress is pathetically low. White males represent approximately 40 percent of the US population, yet comprise 77 percent of the House of Representatives and 87 percent of the Senate, a total of 79 percent of Congress. African-americans (both male and female) represent approximately 13 percent of the U.S. population, 9 percent of the House, zero percent of the Senate, a total of 7 percent of Congress.

How can we expect the American people to elect a black president when they cannot keep a black Senator in office? Perhaps there just aren’t that many blacks aspiring to public office. Even still, that cannot possibly account for the fact that there are currently no black senators.

Next, we can look at the trends for the blacks who have braved to run for the Presidential office. Jesse Jackson ran for the nomination of the Democratic Party in 1984 and 1988. Both times, he was unable to win the nomination. Colin Powell was speculated to become a candidate in the Presidency in 1996, but did not enter the race. In 2000, Alan Keyes ran for the Republican Presidential nomination, but eventually stepped down from the race. In this year’s Democratic Candidacy Race, we

have seen Al Sharpton and Carol Moseley Braun. Braun, a former US Senator, recently dropped out of the race. Sharpton recently received zero percent voter support in the Iowa Caucus and the New Hampshire Primary. Democratic sources say Braun felt it was time to quit because her campaign failed to catch fire. Solely based on the trends of black presidential candidates, things aren’t looking too good for the possibility of a black president.

Finally, the number of minority voters in the country is disproportionate due to voting restrictions. With the exceptions of Maine, Vermont, and Massachusetts, the remaining 47 states and the District of Columbia prohibit inmates serving felony convictions from voting in any public elections. While a majority of states restore voting rights to convicted felons after they complete their prison terms or probation periods, at least ten states, including Virginia, Delaware and New Mexico permanently prohibit former felons from voting. Due to the war on crime and racial profiling, there is a disproportionate amount of blacks convicted of felonies. Thus, more blacks are losing their rights to vote. This is not to say that these felons would vote for a black presidential candidate or even at all, but it is something to think about. Also, there are thousands of homeless people who are unable to exercise their right simply because they

don’t have an address to register with.

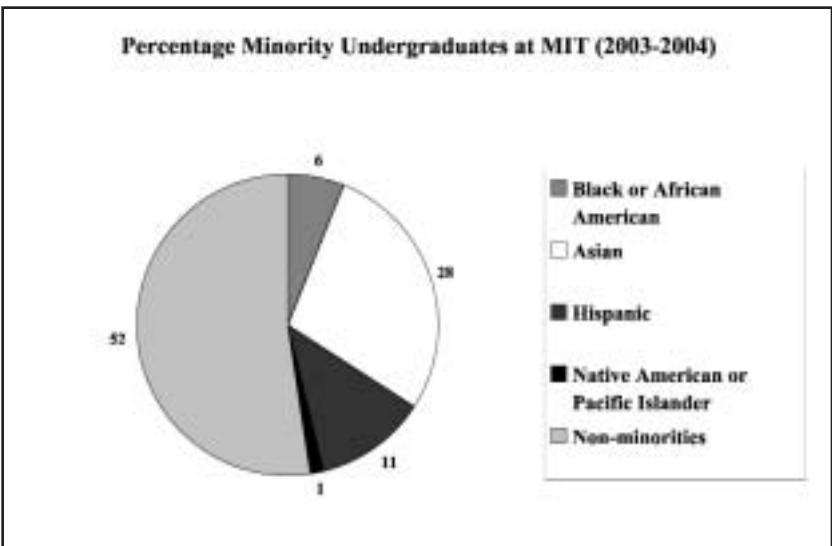
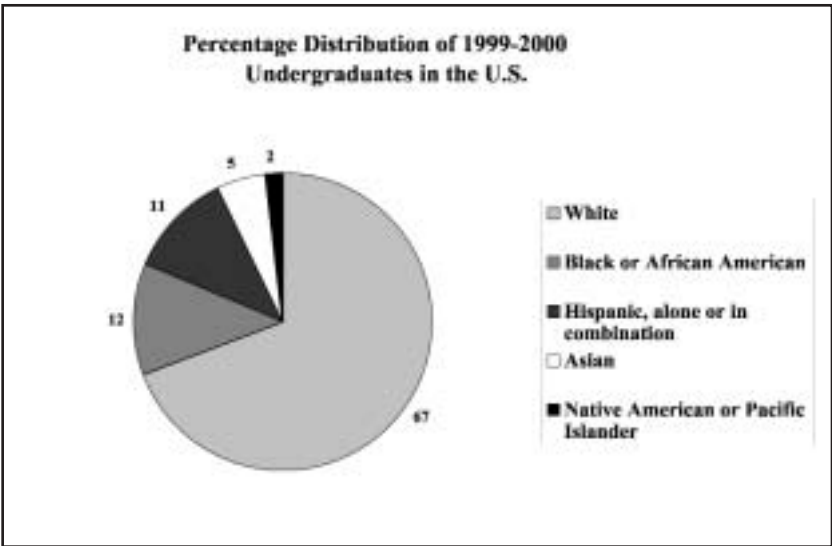
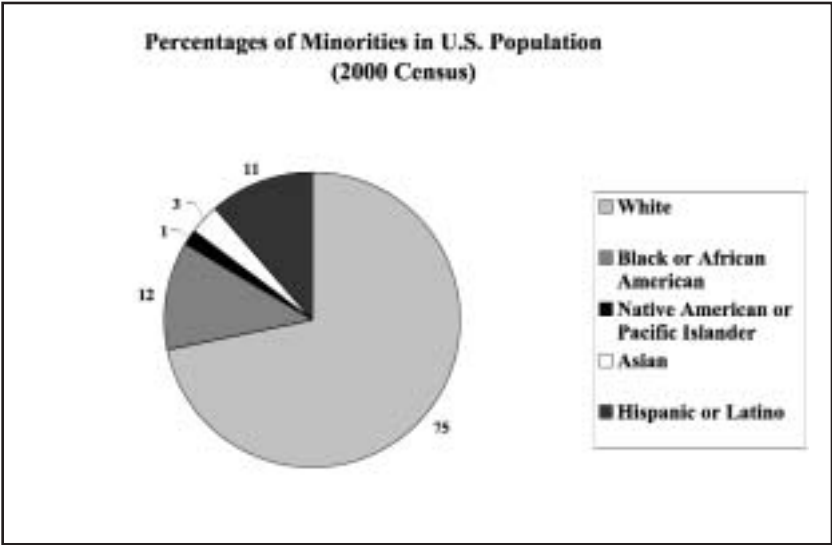
There are probably many other intangible constructs of our society that are working against the election of a black president. Being a black woman, I would love to think that this country has reached a point of equality for all, but then I would only be fooling myself. I do believe that one day this country will have a black president, and apparently I am not the only one. The television drama 24 and the movie blockbuster Deep Impact both have black presidents, so others are definitely open to the idea. But as usual, reality is far behind the imagination of Hollywood.

The question of whether our country is ready for a minority president is one we should all contemplate. The true answer to this question now and in the future will be revealed at the ballot boxes. In closing, I would like to urge all fellow students to vote. Based on the most recent census, only 63.9 percent of the voting population is registered and only 54.7 percent of the voting population actually votes.

There is a problem with that, especially since active participation in government is one of the principles that this country was founded upon. Please make an effort to learn about this year’s presidential candidates and vote. The first step to change is action.

Natasha N. Rushing is a member of the class of 2005.

Race By the Numbers



Diversity GIR Will Benefit MIT Community

Terrence R. Strader

From building and remodeling roads and buildings to evaluating and articulating the goals, content, and structure of the MIT common undergraduate educational experience, MIT is in the process of a complete “makeover.”

One aspect of this makeover that has come out in the open this past semester is the idea of MIT adopting a diversity General Institute Requirement. The lack of education in the areas of race, ethnicity, and culture is a major problem in our society today. Racism, discrimination, and segregation are severe effects caused by this problem, which currently plague communities across the world. Using education as a tool to inform others in our society about the many diverse people in this world would help to eliminate the discrimination and prejudice that cripples our society on a daily basis.

A diversity requirement is not new for most colleges and universities. According to www.diversityweb.org, 63 percent of colleges and universities either have in place a diversity requirement or are in the process of developing one. Some notable schools with diversity requirements in place include Boston College, Brown University, Penn State, UC Berkeley, UCLA, and Wellesley College. Most of these schools require their students to select from a list of designated classes to complete the diversity requirement.

Many colleges and universities are beginning to recognize that they can play a pivotal role in addressing the enduring problems of race relations. For example, the University of Virginia experienced a highly publicized racially charged incident on their campus just last year, when Daisy Lundy, a candidate for a hotly contested Student Council election who is of African-American and Korean heritage, was attacked by an assailant who allegedly used a racial slur during the attack. After this incident, the University of Virginia realized that they could play a role in preventing future racially charged incidents and established a committee to explore a diversity requirement for their school. Will it take something like this to occur at MIT in order for the institute to realize that they play a pivotal role in addressing these enduring racial problems?

For years, MIT has tried to use different approaches to promote awareness and understanding on the issues of diversity and race by offering a number of racial programs, extracurricular activities, workshops, and discussions. Many students and even faculty members of our campus have overlooked these opportunities. Now it is time to take a bigger step and increase our efforts.

This necessary expansion of diversity awareness would come from a required diversity class here at MIT. This class would be one of the eight required HASS classes; it could satisfy Phase I (if necessary), and could be listed as a Communications Intensive class. Consider the following benefits:

Alumni are very important people here at MIT. They are motivators and mentors for many students. Alumni could continue to play this role, but on a more active basis. If we have a mandatory class on diversity, we could have alumni

come and speak to the classes. Dr. Clarence Williams’ book, “Technology and the Dream,” would be a great place to start searching for alumni dedicated to addressing diversity issues on campus. These alumni could come and reflect on their experiences here at MIT, and inform the students how much has changed or stayed the same since they were here. We must continue to break down barriers and progress forward. Actual testimonials would be great exposure to what is going on or has gone on in our society, instead of simply reading articles or watching videos.

A diversity class would not only improve the first year educational experience, but also the lifetime educational experience. Because most first year students come from high schools that presented students with homogeneous racial settings, they would greatly benefit from a college where there is so much diversity and the opportunity to discuss and explore the different people around them. Taking this class will allow students to learn more about everyone around them and feel more so a part of the crowd. When the class ends and the students begin the transition into their sophomore year, they could begin taking full advantage of the environment MIT provides and develop into better leaders.

Advocates for Awareness (AFA) held a forum this past November to get the opinion of the MIT community regarding the adoption of a diversity GIR. The audience consisted of about 60 students, faculty, and administrators who generally supported the idea of having a diversity GIR. The structure of the class was the main area of debate. One of MIT’s current courses, 11.023, “Bridging Racial and Cultural Differences,” was suggested as a model for the class. At the end of the forum, a committee was formed to continue to investigate the idea of MIT adopting a diversity GIR.

This past semester, Tobie Weiner’s class Solving Problems in Race and Education (17.907) took on the project of assessing the feasibility of implementing a diversity GIR as its final project.

The class found that many professors who already teach subjects focused on diversity supported the idea and expressed interest in teaching a diversity GIR class. Professor of Writing Kenneth Manning said that he thought it was “scandalous that we don’t already have a diversity GIR.”

The class will continue to investigate the possibility of a diversity GIR this upcoming semester. Members of the committee created after the AFA forum will also work towards the goal of helping to implement a diversity GIR.

We are currently moving towards the light in seeing a diversity GIR at MIT. A number of students who support the idea have applied to join the task force on the educational commons and the student advisory group for selecting the next MIT President in order to provide a voice for the adoption of a diversity GIR. If you are interested in learning more about the idea of MIT adopting a diversity GIR, e-mail Advocates for Awareness at afa-exec@mit.edu.

Terrence R. Strader ’04 is a member of the Committee on Campus Race Relations and the founder of Advocates for Awareness.

The GSC Column

GRADUATE STUDENT COUNCIL

This article marks the first installment of a bi-weekly piece sponsored by the Graduate Student Council (GSC) called the GSC Column, named after our logo. Its purpose will be to keep the student body up-to-date on the GSC's activities and programs. The GSC is the representative student government for all graduate students and is composed of nearly a dozen boards and committees, and over 250 volunteers. It organizes more than 100 programs, initiatives, and events each year.

As part of its commitment to transparency and accountability to the

graduate student body, the GSC has compiled a mid-year review of its major accomplishments since May 2003. As the timeline below only lists the highlights of our activities, we invite you to visit our website for more information about the Council or to find out how you can get involved at <http://web.mit.edu/gsc>.

If there are any issues that you would like to see addressed in future installments of the GSC Column, please visit our website and submit them via the online form. Remember, we're here to work for you!

May/June — Successfully worked with the administrators to reduce the net impact of a 60 percent increase in health insurance premiums to 20 percent for most graduate students. A process for monthly billing for health insurance premiums was also developed and implemented.

July — Helped to found the student health advisory committee (SHAC), which will address issues related to health care at MIT, such as women's health, electronic services, and health insurance.

July — Was part of a group that successfully worked with administrators to get Z-Center hours extended to better serve student members.

July — Hosted "Acoustic BBQ" series, featuring live music and tasty dishes, and served over a thousand students who came to hang out and enjoy the Boston summer.

August/September — Hosted the most successful graduate orientation in MIT's history, with a total attendance of over 4500 students for the nearly 30 separate activities.

September — Co-sponsored MIT's largest Career Fair with the Class of 2004 and the Society of Women Engineers.

September — Completed the planning process for the GSC cost of living advisory board (GSC COLAB). GSC COLAB is a group that investigates graduate student income vs. expenses while formalizing student input into the decision-making related to on-campus housing rents, health insurance rates and stipends. The aim is to help ensure that graduate student expenses do not exceed their income.

October — Celebrated the fiftieth anniversary of the GSC with a three-day festival that included an alumni reunion, cherry tree dedication ceremony, banquet, Oktoberfest, and birthday party. Supported by Dean for Graduate Students Ike Colbert and Dean for Student Life Larry Benedict, GSC alumni spanning 47 years attended the events.

October — The GSC Website/ShuttleTrack won the Best Electronic Services Program award, given by the National Association of Graduate Professional Students. Of the ten program categories, the MIT

GSC has won awards in eight over the last five years.

October — The GSC Grad Rat premiered, representing the first customized ring for graduate students. With individual designs available for every graduate department and program, the new ring reflects the diversity of graduate culture and embodies the collective experience at MIT. More detailed information is available at <http://web.mit.edu/gsc/www/initiatives/ring>.

November — In conjunction with the Black Graduate Students Association, received funding from the Graduate Students Office for the proposal to support activities aimed at increasing the recruitment of underrepresented minorities in the graduate school. In January, the Office of the Provost also joined in sponsoring the initiative.

November — The GSC general body drafted and adopted a statement calling on the U.S. government to implement student visa reforms that will make it less difficult for international students to study in the U.S.

December — Worked with the MIT department of transportation and the Dean for Graduate Students to start the first ever daytime shuttle ser-

vice between the graduate residence halls in the northwest area and main campus.

January — In conjunction with the Undergraduate Association, the GSC organized the first ever student advisory group to the corporation committee on the Presidency. This group will collect input from the student body concerning qualities and experiences they wish to see in MIT's next President. It will submit a report to the MIT Corporation outlining these traits and providing recommendations for possible candidates. We welcome input from the student body at <http://web.mit.edu/gsc/www/initiatives/president/>.

January — Hosted its annual ski trip to Smuggler's Notch in Vermont. This year's much-anticipated trip saw nearly 400 participants and sold out in a record two days.

Currently — Working via GSC COLAB to help ensure that graduate students' cost of living is addressed. Nominations for GSC Committee chair positions are also open this month. If you're interested in getting involved in the GSC, please visit http://web.mit.edu/gsc/www/about/get_involved/ — there's something for everyone!

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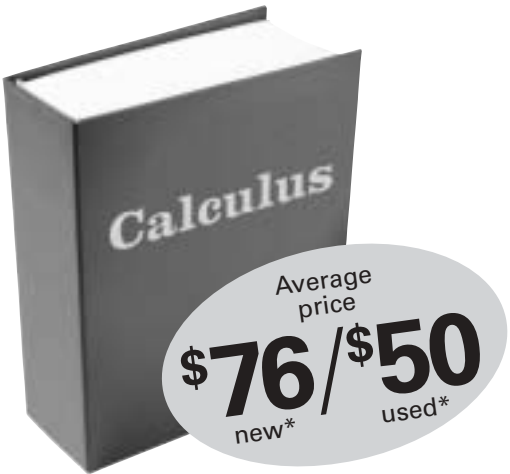
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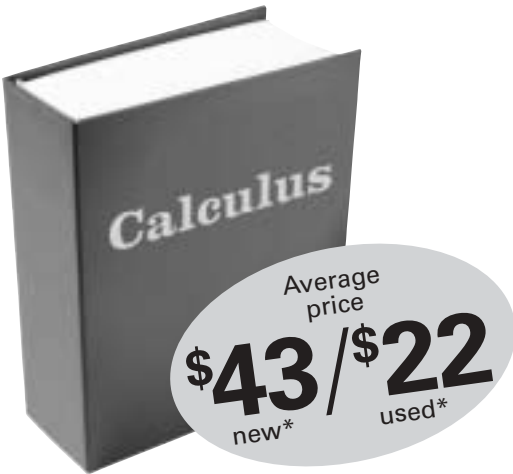
BEN GALLUP—THE TECH

A few of the Super Bowl champion Patriots celebrate with their cheering fans during Tuesday's homecoming parade. Pictured are (left to right) New England Patriots Mike Vrabel, Willie McGinest, Christian Fauria (top center), Richard Seymour (bottom center), Larry Izzo, and Damon Huard. Boston Police estimate a total crowd of 1.5 million gathered to celebrate.

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Volleyball Starts New Era at 2-2

By Paul Dill
TEAM COACH

Having coached the women's program at MIT for eight seasons helping them to a few national rankings and three trips to the NCAA tournament, Head Coach Paul Dill took over the men's program in hopes of building it to the same prestige. The Engineers started the rebuilding process by joining the New England Division of North Eastern Collegiate Volleyball Association (NECVA), and after a slow start, have managed to even out their record at 2-2.

The season saw MIT first face Emmanuel College (the team Dill

coached the year before) in a hard fought battle. Although the Engineers played hard and showed moments of brilliance, a rash of service errors and tight play allowed Emmanuel to come away with the win 3-1. Robert M. McAndrew '05 led the offense with 18 kills while fellow middle hitter Robert G. Aspell '06, contributed seven kills of his own to the effort. The growing pains continued against Mount Ida College as again the team was plagued by service and receiving errors. Though MIT kept each game very close, they could not find the winning formula and succumbed to an 0-3 defeat.

Against Elms College, the Engineers started to play more as a team as the offense was more evenly dis-

tributed, getting everyone on the team their fair share of kills. Hao Hu '04 stood out defensively with ten digs for the match while also adding six service aces.

The win inspired confidence in their next match, as the Engineers would be taken all the way to the wire against Lasell College. After taking a two games to one lead, MIT dropped the fourth game forcing a deciding fifth game. It was then that outside hitter Michelangelo A. Raimondi '06 took control of the match, scoring several kills to lead the team to victory 3-2. Jordan X. Wan '06 dished out 56 assists in the marathon match, while McAndrew and Javad Golji '06 contributed 22 and 16 kills, respectively.

Women's Track Snatches Second Place at TechTrack Classic Meet

By Meredith Silberstein
TEAM MEMBER

MIT's Women's Track team took second place to Division I team Holy Cross in a competitive field of six teams this past Saturday at the TechTrack Classic. MIT's 84.40 points just edged out third place finisher Mount Holyoke's 78.50 and fourth place NYU's 74.50.

Co-Captain Martha W. Buckley '04 was the star of the meet, setting varsity records in the mile and 1000 in 5:10.23 and 3:05.05, respectively. Andrea Staid '07 followed Buckley in the 1000 to take fifth place in the New England Division III qualifying time of 3:12.90. Christine Fanchiang '07 and Chinwe P. Nyenke '04 tied for

fifth place in the 55 meter high hurdles with a New England Division III qualifying time of 9.41 seconds.

MIT dominated the jumping events, winning three of the four events and filling in many of the other scoring places. Co-captain Catherine A. Tweedie '04 continued her phenomenal season winning the pole vault with a new personal and facility record of 11'9" and placing sixth in the long jump. Elizabeth H. Au '07 and Fanchiang took fifth and sixth in the pole vault with New England Division III qualifying vaults of 9'7" and 9'1", respectively. Nalini Gupta '05 returned from a few weeks off to win the long jump with a college personal record of 16'9" and took second in the triple jump. Nyenke won the triple jump with a distance

of 35'3.5" and took fifth in the long jump. Meredith N. Silberstein '05 rounded out the long jump, taking fourth place and giving MIT four of the six scoring positions.

MIT's pair of throwers, Adrienne M. Irmer '04 and Kelly M. Johnson '05, made a strong showing in both the weight throw and shot put. Irmer just missed the New England Division III qualifying standard, taking fourth in the shot put. Irmer also took second in the weight throw with an All New England qualifying toss of 46'0.50", followed in third by Johnson with a personal record of 39'11.25".

Both the men's and women's track teams will be competing in the Greater Boston Championships this coming Saturday at Harvard at 1 p.m.

MIT Swimming Team Takes Second in Final Meet of Winter Season

By Victoria Anderson
TEAM MEMBER

The Women's Swimming and Diving Team closed out its dual meet season with a 176-113 loss at Amherst College Jan. 31, leaving them with a final record of 6-3 for the season (4-1 in NEWMAC). Erin M. Zoller '05, Melissa E. Dere '06, Katherine C. Thornton '07, and Kathryn M. Duffy '04 finished behind two Amherst teams in the 200-yard medley relay, taking third with a time of 1:56.57. Immediately after the relay, Thornton was back in the water to take first in the 1000 free with her 10:46.40 effort.

Though finishing second in the 200 free, Duffy's time of 1:56.41 was a new institute record and a provisional national qualifying time. Georgene M. Hilb '04 touched in at 1:59.85 to take third. In the first round of stroke races, Dere took second in the 100 breast with a time of 1:12.10 while Thornton finished the 200 fly in 2:18.56 to take third.

Duffy took another second place in the 50 free with a time of 24.94, while Zoller finished in 26.38 to

take third. In the 100 free, Duffy also took second with her time of 53.72. The second round of stroke races saw Zoller and Dere take third in the 200 back (2:21.36) and 200 breast (2:33.55), respectively.

Thornton and Hilb posted second and third place in the 500 free with times of 5:20.47 and 5:23.00, respectively. The final individual event of the meet, the 200 IM, gave the team second and third place finishes from Jennifer A. La'O '05 (2:16.60) and Zoller (2:23.89), respectively. The Beavers wrapped up the meet with a second-place finish in the 400 free relay, as the team of Hilb, Stephanie A. Sidelko '07, Mabel Y. Feng '06, and Jennifer J. DeBoer '05 finished in a time of 3:51.42.

Also contributing to the Beavers' point total were divers Maithilee Kunda '06 and Jaryn E. Finch '04. In the one meter event, Kunda took second with a total of 127.58, and Finch was third with a total of 126.53. In the three meter event, Finch was second with a total of 139.20, and Kunda was third with a total of 125.40.

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SPORTS

Super Bowl Blunders

By Yong-yi Zhu
SPORTS COLUMNIST

Wasn't the Super Bowl great? Not only did you have another close game decided by a last-second play,

Column

not only did you have the longest play in Super Bowl history, not only did you have the two opposing quarterbacks play their hearts out, but you even got a brief glance at Janet Jackson's right breast. Wow, the Super Bowl is a real treat.

I used to think that people watched the Super Bowl to see a good game, laugh at witty commercials, and just plain have fun. It's no longer the case with football anymore. At the beginning of the season, I commented on how Pepsi and Britney Spears dominated opening night of the NFL; now at the end of the season, not only has the marketing not improved, but it's taken a horrific turn for the worse.

This time, instead of overwhelming the audience with a pop idol and a soft drink, it was animal violence and nudity. When you think about the Super Bowl, you used to think of those funny frogs that "Bud," "Weis," and "Er"ed their way into our hearts. You remembered the Super Bowl when the beer bottles played throughout the course of the real game. You also remembered the "Wazzup!!" that made us all laugh; well, it at least made half of us laugh while the other half went "Huh?"

I must agree that the Mastercard commercial was quite clever. Not only did it feature Homer Simpson doing Homer Simpson-like things, but it also amused us without being offensive to anyone. The new Bud commercial on the other hand, featured a dog biting a man's crotch in order for the man to relinquish his alcohol. Another commercial was highlighted by a horse discharging gas into the face of a woman in order to burn her face. On top of that, there is the halftime show that people won't be forgetting, or be forgetting to download, for a while.

In fact, immediately afterwards, there were postings online everywhere of the "greatest peep show on Earth" with pictures and video footage. MTV apologized saying that this was not planned and not intentional. Janet Jackson said that there was a wardrobe failure. But none of that seems to be plausible to me.

Why did she have jewelry on her nipple? Why did only half of her shirt rip off? Why did Justin Timberlake pull her shirt off in the first place? It seems that the higher quality the football, the more horrible the quality the rest of the entertainment. In the last seven years, the Super Bowl has been decided by a touchdown or less four times. In the seven years before that, it's been decided by a touchdown or less once: the Scott Norwood disaster. In fact, most Super Bowls are blowouts, although we only remember the close ones.

Before, the commercials were the things that kept the audience tuning in and keeping the ratings high. Around the time of the Tennessee and St. Louis Super Bowl, people began tuning in for the game, instead of just the commercials. The Kevin Dyson one-yard reach captivated everyone watching that day despite the lack of quality in commercials. The Adam Vinatieri field goal capped off another great game that kept us in our seats all the way until the post-game.

Perhaps it's the fear that people won't be tuning in to the big game that forces the networks to show the crap that they do. They pull all the stops in order to make as much money as they possibly could. Not only is the Super Bowl important, but CBS wanted to keep the audience for the "Survivor All Star" episode.

But if that's all that CBS cares about, they can continue showing pornography to children at 8:30 p.m. at night. Maybe they didn't realize that it's possible to turn the TV off, and that's just what people will do if things become too offensive.

MIT Men's Gymnastics Asymptotic Climb towards the Championship

By Zachery Eisenstat
TEAM MEMBER

Winning is not everything. This motto is often preached to those seeking a safety net to lessen the



tion.

As the band of acrobatically inclined brothers proved two Fridays ago at MIT in their season opening meet against Southern Connecticut State University, winning, indeed, is not everything. SCSU took the meet scoring 184.2 to MIT's 141.7. And while the preseason shows incredible improvement, victory does not sit on the team's immediate horizon, though it is becoming increasingly more imaginable. These gymnasts show a love

and bring an energy that is nothing short of refreshing and entertaining to an already intriguing and innovative sport.

Remove the pressure of winning and all that is left is room to succeed. The team's two gymnasts who arrived with previous experience showed an impressive performance, highlighted by Bradley J. Sutton '07 in his first meet as a Beaver with an exquisite routine on the pommel horse, receiving the highest score of the meet. Another incredible moment for the Engineers was again a first time exhibition, this time by Luis R. Perez '06, showing nothing short of Herculean strength on the rings holding his back lever (body perpendicular under the rings) with what seemed to be ease.

This season opener was highlighted with the return of an MIT gymnastics alum. Former captain and four time MVP winner Damian

Engen '03 proved that one can never rid themselves of gymnastics, though gymnastics can rid itself of them. In what could be titled an amusing show, this once MIT great competed with the team throwing an impressive tusk layout on vault (a round-off back tuck while keeping the body straight) coupled with a few less impressive skills on other events.

A successful start to their season, MIT men's gymnastics proves that winning is not everything, but that succeeding at learning and executing incredible skills just might be. While they are not the best team, the level at which they compete is far ahead of their years of experience, many having only been training for two years in a sport that often takes over ten to become competent. It seems unquestionable that this team is on a track of progress with no foreseeable end.

NCAA: ACC to Overwhelm Tournament

By Brian Chase
SPORTS EDITOR

Now that the football season is over, attention in the sports world can turn to other things, like the

Column

N C A A Division I basketball season now fully underway. Plus, now that the season is roughly half over, some trends in this year's teams are being revealed. The biggest and most substantiated trend of this year is that the Atlantic Coast Conference is having a great year, while several other conferences are much worse than they were last year. This combination could lead to an all-time record for tournament bids for one conference.

Before this season, the most powerful basketball conference seemed to be the Big XII, since it had gotten two teams into the Final Four of the NCAA basketball tournament each of the last two years. But now, none of the three teams that were a part of that trend — Kansas, Texas, and Oklahoma — are in the top ten; they all have at least one conference loss, and unheralded Texas Tech and Oklahoma State are playing better ball. All this means that the Big XII heavy hitters are not going to dominate this year; the conference will not get as many tournament bids as in previous years, and all the teams that do get in will probably be out by the Sweet 16 or the Elite Eight at the very latest.

A digression: I was watching the ESPN highlight reel of KU's loss to Iowa State last Saturday and the

announcers rolled out this statistic: "the Jayhawks are 13-0 when scoring 70 points or more, and 0-3 when they don't." Well, DUH! When a team doesn't score that many points, they do tend to lose. That statistic doesn't even imply the Jayhawks lose low-scoring games because it could just be that the other team plays better defense and scores a ton of points. These kinds of comments by ESPN and other college broadcasters bug me.

College b-ball pundits such as *SI.com*'s Stewart Mandel report that a similar change of fortunes to the Big XII is happening in other conferences like the Big Ten and Pacific Ten. There was a series earlier this year where Big Ten teams played ACC teams, and the ACC won nearly all of those contests. The Pac-10 conference has only two teams, Stanford and Arizona, that have ever been ranked in the top 25 on either the Associated Press or College Coaches poll. That is not to say that, like the Pac-10, there aren't good teams in these conferences, just that there are fewer of them, or that the best teams in these conferences aren't as good as the best teams in these conferences last year. And some of the smaller conferences, which usually contribute a team or two to the tourney, are also struggling to produce a team qualified for a bid. Across the board, most college basketball conferences are weaker this season.

Except for the ACC, that is. Home to Duke, North Carolina, Georgia Tech, NC State, Wake For-

est, and others, the ACC has had more teams rated in the top ten of both polls than any other conference. There was a time earlier this season when three of the top five teams in the country as rated by the Coaches' poll were ACC teams. And in what may be the most important factor, the Ratings Percentage Index, and rating of basketball teams by calculated statistics somewhat like the BCS in college football, has eight of the nine ACC teams in the top 40. That may not sound impressive, but the RPI has a huge influence on who goes to the tournament, and there are only 65 tournament bids. These eight teams also have at least six more wins than losses. If the latter part of the season continues as the first part has, all eight of these teams will get into the tournament, a record number for the ACC. At the same time, the Big Ten and Pac-10 could qualify a record low number of teams.

The worst part of the ACC dominance trend this year is that it kills, at least for now, my assertion a few weeks ago of parity in college b-ball. But, I look forward to knowing that next year, the fates of the college conferences will probably change as much as they did this year and put a new conference on top of things. In addition, for all its regular season dominance, the chance for any one ACC team to win the tournament is more or less the same as a good team from any other conference. So in that sense at least, Div. I College Basketball is still anybody's game.

UPCOMING HOME EVENTS

Saturday, Feb. 7

1 p.m., Varsity Men's Basketball, Coast Guard
3 p.m., Varsity Women's Basketball, Clark
7 p.m., Varsity Men's Ice Hockey, Connecticut College

Monday, Feb. 9

7 p.m., Varsity Men's Volleyball, Newbury



The Cynical Fan: Why We Assume the Worst About Our Sports Superstars

By Yong-yi Zhu
SPORTS COLUMNIST

Dear LeBron James, I know that the semester is just beginning, and I didn't want to start

Column

on a bad note. So, I would like to apologize for the negative comments I almost made about you this week. I had read a blurb that you would not be participating in the NBA All Star game's dunking competition despite receiving an invite. Immediately, I came to the conclusion that you thought you are above such a silly little contest. Only when I read the entire article did I remember your ankle injury and how this competition would actually be detrimental to your health. Let me explain why I so suddenly jumped to conclusions about your situation. I must stress that this cynicism is not entirely my fault.

The initial cause that came to mind was Barry Bonds from last

summer. He was invited to perform in the Home Run Derby and promptly declined the invitation. I think that you can see the resemblance between the two events, at least up to this point. But soon, Bonds proceeded to be the jerk he is traditionally known to be. When he was asked about why he chose not to go, Bonds childishly stated that he did not have to do anything which he did not want to do.

To think, a superstar denying the chance for his fans to see him in action seems rather selfish. What were Bonds' motives for playing the game of baseball? This caused me to be rather cynical about sports players in general.

Of course, actions of Barry Bonds, the man many love to hate, do not surprise me. However, those of Sammy Sosa, the man everyone loves to love, did. I don't think anyone was ready to see his corked bat, and with that shattering bat came a million questions that the sports

fans must now pose every time a batter hits a home run. I can no longer feel like the innocent kid that goes to a baseball game to see the deep ball; instead, I'm forced to be the adult that wonders if anyone or everyone is cheating. I know the cynicism is horrible, but I just can't help it.

This doesn't even stop at the pro level. Even college programs lie about their situations. Take the fiasco with Maurice Clarett as another example. Clarett, the ex-running back for the Ohio State Buckeyes, reported that he had various expensive equipment that was stolen from his car. Now, Clarett is just a college student, even though he may be a potential star. He hasn't yet signed with any companies in order to make money, so where was this expensive equipment coming from? With that sudden realization, Clarett changed his story and reported that the car was his friend's and that he was just borrowing it; everyone

know that was a lie. So where was Clarett getting all the money?

Well, obviously, not everything was kosher with him and the team suspended him for an entire year because of it. It's sad that the amateurs of today must be reminded of their status. The students are too money-hungry for their own good, and often times are not telling the truth about where their money comes from. LeBron, granted I had the same doubts about you when you bought that Hummer, but I guess everything checked out. Still, I have to think twice now and be skeptical about everything that happens in the college realm in terms of financial aid and signing contracts.

Another memorable, but horrible example happened last year with the death of Patrick Dennehy. After his death, the Baylor basketball program did not come out with all the facts so that the investigation could be made easier and the truth could be found more quickly. Instead,

Dave Bliss, the head coach of the Baylor basketball team, covered up many improper financial supports and several drug tests that showed positive results; Bliss left the program afterwards.

Not only did this mishap involve sports, but the life of a college student was at stake as well. It forced me to think twice about how much the coaches around the country care about the well-being of themselves versus their players.

I guess those things at least have made me into more of a skeptic. But you can see where I'm coming from, right? I know that most athletes are still there to play hard and entertain the fans, but it's those few that don't who make us wonder. I know that you yourself have been a model citizen in Cleveland, and I hope your team does well in the second half of the season.

Your fan,
Yong-yi Zhu